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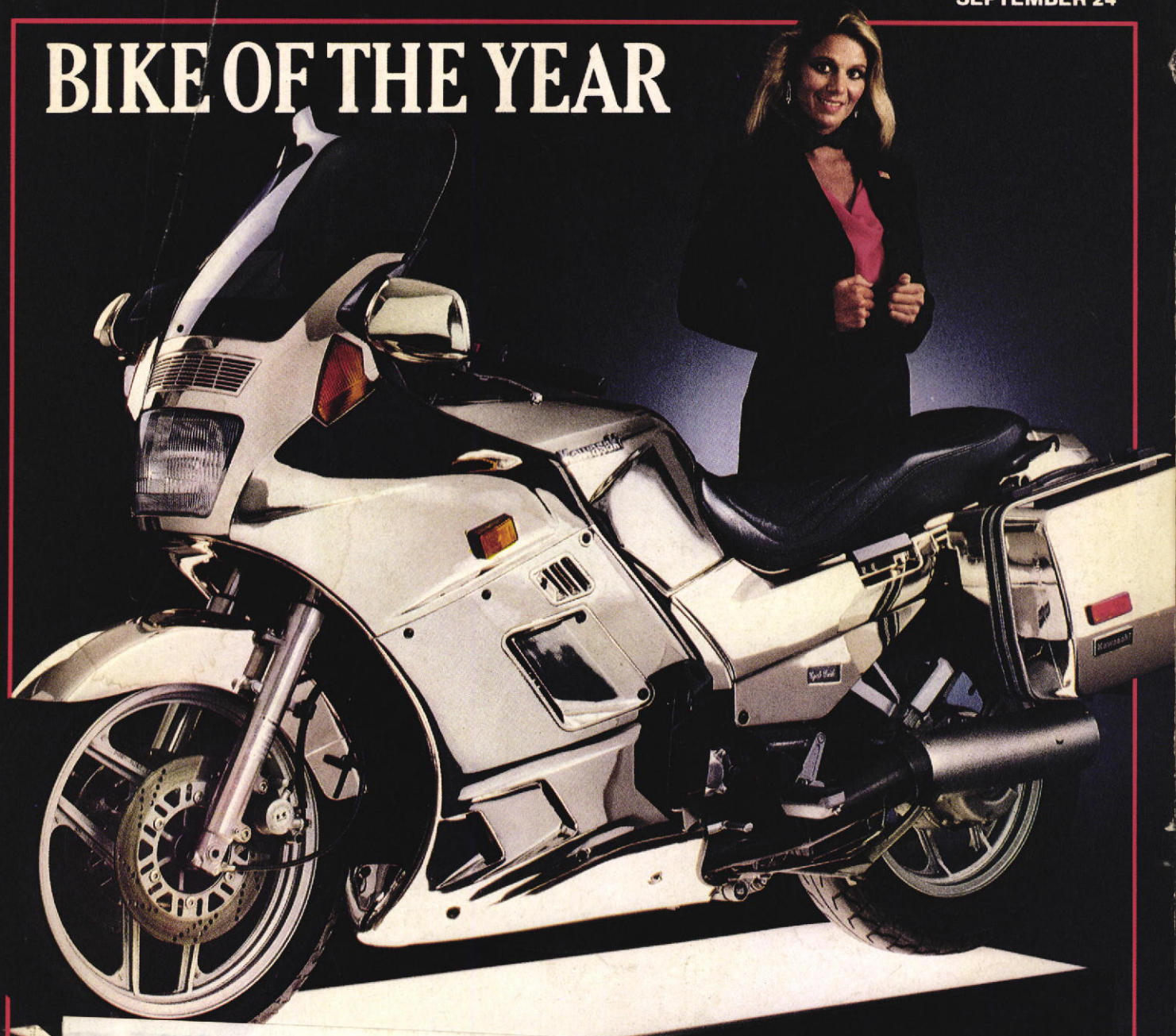

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ON THE COVER: Speed and style for the two-wheel jet set—that's Kawasaki's Concours. Robin Riggs caught the Concours and flight attendant on the runway prior to takeoff. Moments later all three were spotted doing victory rolls over Torrance, celebrating the Concours shooting down the competition in this year's Bike of the Year. Check out the Concours' flight plan on page 15.

QUOTE: "Nobody cares about good fuel mileage anymore, so we've decided to go for a land speed record."

—Pg. 72

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NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Dear Reader:

Starting with this issue, CYCLE GUIDE magazine will be published nine times a year, instead of eleven. The August-September, October-November, December-January issues will be combined. We believe this move reflects both the needs of the marketplace and the seasonal nature of motorcycling.

What do you, the reader, get out of this? A better magazine, new editorial departments and *more* motorcycle information.

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All in all, we're pleased with the change, and we think you will be, too. It will allow us more time to do the stories and tests we feel are most important, and in doing so, serve you, the reader, better than ever before.

Yours,
Peter S. Nicolaysen
Publisher

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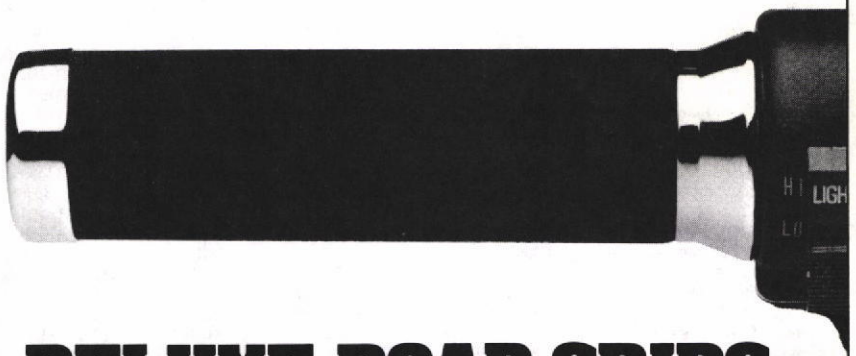

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OFF-ROAD

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	TYPE	ENGINE TYPE	WHEEL TRAVEL, IN. FRONT/REAR	WEIGHT, LBS.	RAKE/TRAIL, DEGREES/INCHES	GEARS
Cagiva WRX 250-'84	August '84	Enduro	Two-stroke	11.1/11.6	232	30.0/4.65	6
Honda ATC250R-'84	May '84	ATV	Two-stroke	8.8/8.0	311	N/A	5
Honda ATC350X-'85	September '85	ATV	Four-stroke	8.0/7.0	324	23.0/1.4	6
Honda FourTrax 4x4-'86	Nov./Dec. '85	ATV	Four-stroke	4.1/4.6	570	3.0/0.5	5
Honda CR125R-'84	April '84	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.2/12.3	195	27.2/4.29	6
Honda CR250R-'86	February '86	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.7/12.0	221	27.5/4.41	5
Honda CR500R-'85	February '85	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.6/12.3	232	27.5/4.41	5
Honda XR200R-'86	July '86	Enduro	Four-stroke	9.4/10.5	226	27.0/4.53	6
Honda XR250R-'86	July '86	Enduro	Four-stroke	10.4/11.0	250	26.5/4.33	6
Honda XR600R-'85	October '85	Desert	Four-stroke	10.9/11.4	284	28.0/4.65	5
Husqvarna 250WRX-'85	August '85	Enduro	Two-stroke	11.8/12.5	239	27.0/4.72	6
Husqvarna 430 Auto-'86	March '86	Enduro	Two-stroke	10.7/11.5	245	27.0/4.72	3
Husqvarna 500CR-'85	April '85	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.9/12.9	235	27.0/4.72	4
Husqvarna 510TE-'85	March '85	Enduro	Four-stroke	10.6/11.9	263	28.5/5.16	6
Kawasaki KDX200-'86	March '86	Enduro	Two-stroke	10.1/10.7	225	26.5/5.31	6
Kawasaki KX125-'86	January '86	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.2/12.6	201	27.5/4.57	6
Kawasaki KX250-'84	February '84	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.6/12.3	220	28.5/4.65	5
Kawasaki KXT250 Tecate-'84	May '84	ATV	Two-stroke	8.6/8.2	319	N/A	5
Kawasaki KLR600-'84	September '84	Dual-purpose	Four-stroke	9.2/8.3	322	29.5/4.80	5
KTM 500MX-'86	June '86	Motocross	Two-stroke	10.9/10.8	227	28.0/N/A	5
Suzuki Quadracer 250-'85	May '85	ATV	Two-stroke	7.2/8.1	326	N/A	5
Suzuki RM125-'85	May '85	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.4/11.8	202	29.0/4.84	6
Suzuki RM250-'84	February '84	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.8/12.9	220	27.8/4.41	5
Yamaha BW200-'85	April '85	Trail	Four-stroke	6.3/6.6	249	27.3/3.46	5
Yamaha IT200-'84	August '84	Enduro	Two-stroke	10.0/10.6	211	28.0/4.53	6
Yamaha TT350-'86	May '86	Trail	Four-stroke	10.4/9.3	261	27.5/4.53	6
Yamaha TT600-'85	October '85	Trail	Four-stroke	11.3/10.7	283	28.0/4.65	5
Yamaha TY350-'85	July '85	Trials	Two-stroke	6.5/4.8	193	23.0/1.93	6
Yamaha XT600-'86	Aug./Sept. '86	Dual-purpose	Four-stroke	9.4/9.2	317	28.0/4.21	5
Yamaha YZ250-'86	April '86	Motocross	Two-stroke	11.7/12.0	225	28.0/4.69	5

STREET

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	ENGINE TYPE*	DISPLACEMENT, CC	QUARTER-MILE, SEC./MPH	TOP SPEED, MPH	WEIGHT, LBS.	FUEL CONSUMPTION, MPG	STOPPING DISTANCE FROM 60 MPH, FT.
BMW K75C-'86	June '86	3I/G	740.4	13.171/102.03	121	480	37–54	142
BMW K100-'86	March '86	4I/G	987.2	12.412/108.82	122	506	35–46	139
BMW K100RT-'86	May '86	4I/G	987.2	13.255/98.90	130	595	39–44	124
BMW R80-'85	September '85	2C/G	782.5	13.357/98.36	114	439	37–52	148
Cagiva Alazzurra 650 SS-'86	February '86	90 deg. 2D/F	649.6	12.982/99.18	113	432	34–49	135
H-D FLTC Tour Glide-'86	May '86	45 deg. 2D/H	1337.7	14.378/90.00	107	748	39–48	141
H-D FXRS Low Rider Sport-'86	Nov./Dec. '85	45 deg. 2D/F	1337.7	13.654/96.25	115	592	31–50	132
H-D FXRT Sport Glide-'85	October '84	45 deg. 2D/H	1337.7	14.180/90.36	92	640	28–51	126
H-D XLH 883 Sportster-'86	September '85	45 deg. 2D/F	882.9	14.045/92.40	106	467	37–67	131
Honda Gold Wing Aspencade.-'86	May '86	4C/G	1181.9	13.590/96.56	114	761	32–48	120
Honda Gold Wing Ltd Ed.-'85	March '85	4C/G	1181.9	13.346/98.36	113	810	37–45	134
Honda NS250R-'85	May '85	90 deg. 2D/F††	249.3	13.091/101.58	121	339	27–38	135
Honda NS400R-'85	October '85	90 deg. 3D/F††	387.4	12.324/108.69	125	392	25–45	135
Honda VF500F Interceptor-'84	July '84	90 deg. 4D/F	497.6	12.484/106.00	126	419	33–48	123
Honda VF700C Magna-'85	August '85	90 deg. 4D/G	698.9	12.390/108.82	128	520	34–47	131
Honda VFR750F Interceptor-'86	June '86	90 deg. 4D/F	748.1	11.407/120.48	144	476	33–55	128
Honda VF1000R-'85	July '85	90 deg. 4D/F	998.4	11.308/121.78	149	578	20–42	135
Honda VT1100C Shadow-'85	June '85	45 deg. 2D/G	1099.2	13.022/100.33	112	560	33–44	127
Honda V65 Magna-'85	February '85	90 deg. 4D/G	1098.0	11.440/118.42	142	566	34–46	133
Kawasaki Concours-'86	Aug./Sept. '86	4A/G	997.8	12.497/106.13	130	633	32–58	125
Kawasaki 454 LTD-'85	September '85	2A/H	454.1	13.386/97.08	102	427	37–53	125
Kawasaki GPz750 turbo-'85	Nov./Dec. '85	4A/F	739.0	11.441/118.89	141	532	40–54	135
Kawasaki Eliminator-'85	April '85	4A/G	908.2	11.405/117.49	134	569	22–41	131
Kawasaki Ninja 600R-'85	March '85	4A/F	592.6	12.124/109.09	135	448	40–48	135
Kawasaki Ninja-'85	August '85	4A/F	908.2	11.175/123.79	151	535	32–41	131
Kawasaki Ninja 1000R-'86	January '86	4A/F	997.8	10.994/125.69	162	564	33–44	118
Kawasaki Voyager-'86	May '86	6A/G	1286.1	13.240/99.44	119	878	32–39	142
Kawasaki Voyager XII-'86	July '86	4A/G	1196.5	13.015/101.01	125	732	30–46	126
Suzuki GS550ES-'85	May '85	4A/F	572.3	12.551/106.50	119	447	33–48	133
Suzuki GSX-R750-'86	April '86	4A/F	749.7	11.566/116.42	142	437	30–47	136
Suzuki GS1150E-'85	June '85	4A/F	1135.4	11.032/121.78	146	529	30–55	138
Suzuki GV700GL Madura-'85	Nov./Dec. '84	82 deg. 4D/G	698.5	13.307/102.15	111	546	23–45	143
Suzuki GV1200GL Madura-'85	February '85	82 deg. 4D/G	1165.9	11.364/117.18	140	576	28–45	131
Suzuki GV1400GD Cavalcade LX-'86	May '86	82 deg. 4D/G	1360.4	12.881/101.12	115	806	32–43	155
Suzuki RG500 Gamma-'85	October '85	Square-Four/F††	498.5	11.991/113.20	N/A	374	22–42	134
Suzuki VS700GLF Intruder-'85	July '85	2D/G	699.7	12.998/101.01	112	442	44–63	132
Yamaha FJ1200-'86	July '86	4A/F	1188.4	10.851/127.47	147	539	32–43	132
Yamaha FZ750-'86	March '86	45 deg. 4A/F	749.6	11.383/118.26	145	494	37–45	127
Yamaha RZV500R-'84	October '85	4D/F††	499.7	12.409/107.52	134	422	25–53	147
Yamaha Venture Royale-'86	May '86	70 deg. 4D/G	1294.0	12.998/101.01	136†	784	39–44	130
Yamaha V-Max-'85	May '85	70 deg. 4D/G	1197.6	10.922/127.47	151	596	23–32	137
Yamaha XV700 Virago-'86	March '86	75 deg. 2D/G	699.2	13.686/96.46	104†	489	39–48	130
Yamaha XV1000 Virago-'85	October '85	75 deg. 2D/G	981.0	12.993/101.59	111	507	33–47	132

***A**-Transverse, **B**-Vertical (single-cylinder only), **C**-Horizontally Opposed, **D**-Tandem Vee, **E**-Transverse Vee, **F**-Chain Final Drive, **G**-Shaft Final Drive, **H**-Belt Final Drive, **I**-Horizontal Longitudinal; † indicates a calculated top speed; ††indicates a two-stroke engine

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M48 REAR		M48 FRONT	
130/90H16	50.99	100/90H16	40.99
130/90H16 L	58.99	110/90H16	43.99
140/90H16	54.99	120/80V16	40.99
140/90H16 L	62.99	90/90H18	34.99
150/80V16	54.99	100/90V18	45.99
120/90H17	47.99	110/90V18	52.99
130/90H17	53.99	120/90H18L	57.99
110/90H18	47.99	90/90H19	35.99
120/90V18	53.99	100/90V19	50.99
130/90V18	55.99	110/90H19L	56.99

TG-22 Rear HI Sport		TF-11 Front HI Sport	
160/80V-16	93.99	120/70V-16	65.99
160/60V-17	89.99	120/80V-16	70.99
130/70V-18	76.99	100/80V-18	64.99
140/70V-18	80.99	110/80V-18	71.99
160/60V-18	89.99	110/80V-19	82.99

M66 HI Tour Rear		A66 HI Tour Front	
150/90H-15 L	79.99	L	59.99
140/90H-16 L	70.99	120/90H-18L	58.99

IRC

RS310 R DuroTour		RS310 F DuroTour	
140/90H-15 L	48.99	120/80H-16L	38.99
150/90H-15 L	50.99	100/90H-18	37.99
120/90H-16	37.99	110/90H-18	38.99
130/90H-16 *	45.99	110/90H-18L	39.99
130/90H-17 *	46.99	100/90H-19	37.99
120/90H-18	43.99	100/90H-19L	39.99
130/90H-18 *	46.99	*RWL available +	2.00

METZELER

ME99A REAR		ME33 FRONT	
130/90H16 L	69.99	100/90H16	57.99
140/90H16 L	74.99	120/80V16	64.99
130/90V16	63.99	130/90H16	65.99
140/90V16	69.99	130/90H16 L	70.99
150/80V16	74.99	100/90V18	61.99
130/90V17	67.99	110/90V18	65.99
140/80V17 MBS	83.99	120/90H18	64.99
400V18	57.99	120/90H18 L	69.99
425/85V18	63.99	90/90H-19 L	60.99
120/90V18	65.99	325V19	61.99
130/90V18	69.99	350V19	65.99

ME88 MARATHON REAR			
*150/90H-15	75.99	*130/90H16	67.99
140/90H-16	71.99	*MU90H-16	70.99
*130/90H-17	70.99	120/90H-18	67.99

* For Raised White Letter + 5.00
Metzelers listed are all available in our Store:

YOKOHAMA

F200 FRONT		R200 REAR	
90/90H-19	34.99	140/90H-15	47.99
100/90H-19	36.99	130/90H-16*	44.99
100/90H-19 L	39.99	130/90H-17	*45.99
110/90H-19	38.99	120/90H-18	46.99
110/90H-19 L	41.99	130/90H-18*	47.99
* FOR RWL ADD	3.00	R100 REAR	
F100 FRONT		130/90V-16	48.99
120/80V-16	40.99	140/90V-16	53.99
100/90V-18	38.99	130/90V-17	53.99
100/90V-19	40.99	120/90V-18	51.99
110/90V-19	42.99	130/80V-18	53.99
R110 REAR		F110 FRONT	
140/80V-16	56.99	100/90V-16	39.99
150/80V-16	71.99	110/90V-16	45.99
140/80V-17	62.99	120/80V-16	47.99
110/90V-18	49.99	110/90V-17	46.99
110/80V-18	53.99	90/90V-18	41.99
120/90V-18	59.99	100/90V-18	44.99
120/80V-18	56.99	100/90V-19	48.99
130/80V-18	61.99	110/90V-19	53.99
140/80V-18	70.99		

CARLISLE

TOURMAX		TOURMAX	
MU90S-15 *	52.99	MV85S-15 *	64.99
MT90S-16 *	60.99	MU90S-16 *	62.99
MT90H-17 *	57.99	MP90H-18 *	53.99
MR90H-18 *	55.99	MM90H-19*	48.99
MH90S-21	59.99	* RWL available	+ 4.00

SPORTMAX		SPORTMAX	
120/80V-16	43.99	130/90V-16	49.99
140/90V-16	52.99	130/90V-17	50.99
110/90V-18	41.99	120/90V-18	47.99
130/90V-18	52.99	100/90V-19	41.99
110/90V-19	42.99		

TRANSMAX		TRANSMAX	
130/90S-16	40.99	140/90S-16	42.99
130/90S-17	39.99	110/90S-18	37.99
120/90S-18	38.99	130/90S-18	41.99
100/90S-19	32.99	110/90S-19	33.99

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DUNLOP

K291T REAR		K291T FRONT	
MV85S-15RWL	80.99	MT90S-16 L	62.99
MT90S-16	66.99	MR90S-18 L	57.99
MT90-16 S	74.99	MM90H-19	53.99
MU90S-16L	72.99	S= Single White Stripe	
MT90S-17	62.99	L=Raised White Letter	
MP85H-18	58.99		

K391S REAR		K391S Front Rear	
120/90V-16	51.99	110/90V-18	46.99
130/90V-16	59.99	100/90V-19	48.99
150/80V-16	70.99		
130/90V-17	56.99	K391S FRONT	
140/80V-17	62.99	100/90V-16	48.99
120/90V-18	53.99	120/80V-16	49.99
130/80V-18	58.99	120/90V-16	53.99

K391S REAR RWL		K391S Front RWL	
120/90V-16	58.99	100/90V-18	50.99
130/90V-16	62.99	110/90V-18	53.99
130/90V-17	64.99	100/90V-19	55.99
120/90V-18	60.99	RWL=Raised White Letter	
130/90V-18	66.99	F11 FRONT	
K627 REAR		100/90H-16	35.99
140/90H-15 L	61.99	120/80-16	39.99
150/90H-15	60.99	130/90H-16	49.99
150/90-15 L	63.99	130/90H-16L	55.99
460S-16(K127)	36.99	100/90H-18	31.99
130/90H-16	49.99	110/90-18	39.99
130/90H-16	54.99	M120/90-18L	47.99
M140/90-16L	64.99	100/90H-19	36.99
120/90V-17	46.99	100/90H-19L	41.99
130/90H-17	49.99	110/90H-19	42.99
110/90H-18	42.99	110/90H-19L	47.99
130/90H-18	53.99	L= Raised White Letter	

NEW	*K700S SPORT RADIAL*		
130/90V-16	86.99	150/80V16	104.99
130/90V-17	83.99	140/80V-17	92.99
*120/90V-18	78.99	*130/80V18	86.99

* SIZES AVAILABLE RACE COMPOUND + 16.00

CONTINENTAL

RB2 FRONT		K112 REAR	
325H-18	26.99	MT90S-16	42.99
350H-18	34.99	450H-17	43.99
325H-19	34.99	350H-18	36.99
350H-19	38.99	400H-18	40.99
TK22 FRONT		425/85H-18	42.99
100/90V-16	31.99	120/90H-18	43.99
100/90V-18	32.99	TK44 REAR	
110/90V-18	35.99	130/90V-16	42.99
120/90V-18 L	41.99	130/90V-16L	46.99
325V-19	32.99	140/90V-16L	50.99
350V-19	36.99	130/90V-17	44.99
350V-19 L	40.99	130/90V-17L	48.99
100/90V-19	39.99	400V-18	41.99
TKV11 FRONT		425/85V-18	42.99
110/90V-16	47.99	130/90V-18	42.99
120/80V-16	49.99	TKV12 REAR	
100/90V-16	44.99	130/90V-16	58.99
110/90V-18	45.99	150/80V-16	71.99
100/90V-19	48.99	130/90V-17	57.99
TKH-24 BLITZ		140/80V-17	62.99
150/90H-15	71.99	120/90V-18	54.99
120/90H-16	52.99	130/80V-18	59.99
130/90H-16	60.99	150/70V-18	76.99
140/90H-16	62.99	TKH-23 BLITZ	
130/90H-17	57.99	110/90H-18	44.99
129/90H-18	54.99	100/90H-19	47.99
130/90H-18	58.99	110/90H-19	49.99

BRIDGESTONE

SE22 Sport Rear		SE21 Sport Front	
140/90H-15L	59.99	130/90H-16L	56.99
150/90H-15L	65.99	100/90H-18	40.99
130/90H-16	51.99	110/90H-18	43.99
130/90H-16L	56.99	110/90H-18L	47.99
140/90H-16L	64.99	120/90H-18L	52.99
130/90H-17	52.99	90/90H-19	42.99
130/90H-17L	57.99	90/90H-19 L	46.99
110/90H-18	46.99	100/90H-19	45.99
120/90H-18	49.99	100/90H-19L	49.99
130/90H-18	54.99	110/90H-19	52.99
130/90H-18 L	60.99	110/90H-19L	52.99

SEO2 Sport Rear		SE01 Sport Front	
150/80V-16	72.99	100/90V-16	54.99
130/90V-17	62.99	120/80V-16	62.99
140/80V-17	67.99	100/90V-18	48.99
120/90V-18	59.99	110/90V-18	52.99
130/80V-18	64.99	100/90V-19	54.99
140/80V-18	71.99	L= Raised White Letter	

CHENG SHIN

MARQUIS QUALITY & ECONOMY STREET TIRE

C822 REAR		C833 FRONT	
130/90H-16	29.99	100/90H-18	23.99
140/90H-16	33.99	110/90H-18	27.99
120/90H-17	29.99	100/90H-19	25.99
130/90H-17	31.99	110/90H-19	27.99
110/90H-18	28.99		
120/90H-18	31.99		
130/90H-18	33.99		

TO RECIEVE THESE SALE PRICES YOU MUST MENTION THIS AD # **609C** WHEN ORDERING -AD EXPIRES 9-20-86 CG

Voice From The Wilderness

Love, First Love. . .

Minnesota winter couldn't cool Oriental passion.

• It's been 21 years since I bought my first motorcycle, and I think I've finally figured out what's behind my abiding interest.

It's not technology, although I appreciate functional new geegaws as much as anyone. And it isn't power or speed, as I've owned some real slugs that I'd buy back in a heartbeat. And it isn't the biker image—even in full black leathers and one-way visor, I'm no more menacing than your average English teacher.

My motorcycle lust has more to do with growing up with motorcycles. They mean a lot to me now, because they meant a lot to me when I was a teen-ager and needed something to bust me out into the adult world. When I was 15, there was nothing I wanted more than to be able to go where I wanted to go—even if I didn't know where that was. That red Honda 50 did the job, at least for a while.

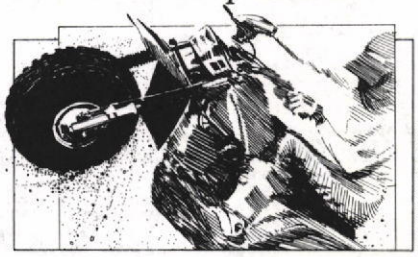
Now, I'm not saying my present interest in motorcycles is just reliving my youth. That's just not the way it is. But having the things be such a big part of my life back then permanently bonded me to them. Every time I'm near a motorcycle, I'm rubbing my nose in the scent of some good times.

It was worth baby-sitting for three years and working in the local hardware store hauling fertilizer bags upstairs in the spring and fixing broken storm windows in the fall to get my first bike. I did all that to get a motorcycle while living in a state where it often snows in April and kids play sandlot hockey through March. Not much of a place to ride a bike, you might say. But to think of that Honda 50 strictly in terms of riding is to sell the experience short. I got two years of enjoyment out of it before I even bought it.

Once I had the OK from my parents to save for the bike, I started living for the thing. I sent away for every motorcycle brochure I heard about. I had brochures for everything from Royal Enfields and Triumphs to Bridgestones and obscure French and Spanish mopeds. I could have recited their specs by memory.

Once I decided upon the Honda 50 (despite the loss of dignity, I chose it because the state only licensed 15-year-olds for step-throughs rated at 5 horsepower or under) and had the $285 needed to pay for the thing, I started hounding my father to take me down to Paul's Cycles in St. Paul.

It was a January Saturday morning when I first suggested we go down to Paul's and get that Honda. Sure there was



© 1986 JOE SAPUTO

six feet of snow outside. But I had some rationale for suggesting the time was right. We could beat the dreaded spring rush. No dice. It didn't work. He had a good point, the weather (like they say, Minnesota has two seasons—winter and the Fourth of July). Still, I had the brochures and magazines. I looked at them before breakfast, on the schoolbus, while walking to classes, while in class, on the bus home, while I ate dinner and in bed. I was so high on bikes, I was even nice to my younger brother for once—I shared the sacred brochures with him.

Apparently, these two-wheel rites are fairly universal. I tried to call Paul's recently, but learned that the shop closed several years ago. But Mark Miller, of Twin City Honda, told me he remembered the shop and noted that he went through the same things I did. He said he had every brochure he could steal from a dealer plastered up on the walls of his room. He also assured me, the tradition is alive and well. He spends Saturday afternoons directing showroom traffic for sweaty-palmed kids, who'll still run off with as many brochures as they can get away with.

My own dreaming ended one Saturday in late March or early April, when my dad gave in. We went to Paul's, plunked down the money, and they delivered the red Honda 50 several years later the same afternoon. The guys from the shop unloaded it in our driveway, and I spent the next several days in the garage looking at it and sitting on it. Then I got a learner's permit. Then a driver's license . . . and the next day had my leg encased in a cast. Only teen-agers really know how cruel life really is. The leg injury, from a track mishap, would keep me in plaster from groin to ankle for more than a month. No problem. I suspended the cast from the handlebars with a piece of twine and rode the Honda up and down the street anyway.

I washed the 50 every day. I could disassemble it and raid every nook and cranny for dust and grime faster than a boot camp *cum laude* could break down his M-16.

When the cast was off, school was out, and Minnesota's version of summer was upon us. It was a great summer, mostly because of the Honda. My brother and I could go anywhere we wanted. We went to a city lake to swim. We rode to carnivals and the county fair. We rode the Honda to go fishing. But mostly we rode it to the motorcycle shops to hang out. Once, some friends and I even rode our bikes to a shop in Minneapolis to look at Harleys. The place was full of guys with tattoos and tool calendars with naked women on them.

The Honda 50 moved with me when the family moved to Washington, D.C., that fall. (Actually it moved in the back of a moving van operated by landlocked pirates who broke its taillights and stole a lot of our valuable possessions.)

Once living in the D.C. suburbs, I found an after-school job and traded the 50 in on a Honda S90 for $410. I wish I still had it. It was a truly handsome little bike. It still meant freedom. I rode it to my new school and was immediately pegged as a weirdo. The three other motorcyclists in the school of 2100 kids were fairly strange, and with my Minnesota Swede accent, I fit right in. My first major act of defiance was putting a reverse cone meg on the exhaust. You could hear that S90 a mile away.

I've owned probably a dozen bikes since then and had the use of dozens more. I've nearly always had a motorcycle. Motorcycling has even turned up on my spotty job resume.

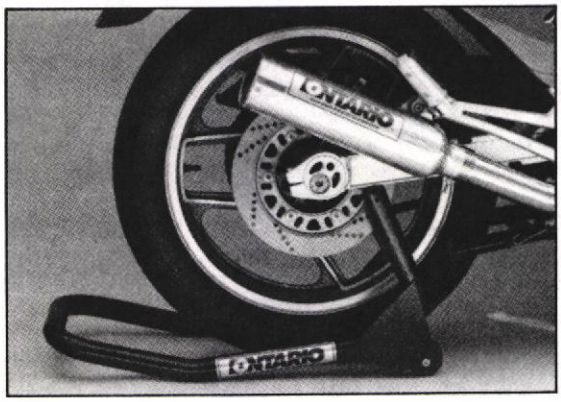
I worked as a motorcycle courier (where I needed two licenses to spread out the tickets), guitar player in rock 'n' roll bands (riding a motorcycle improves one's guitar playing, I have no doubt), dispatcher at delivery services (I told motorcycle riders where to go over the radio), cab driver (where I wished I was riding a motorcycle), warehouse grunt, carpenter, drywall hanger and newspaper reporter (where over the years I got cherry assignments like going with a group of German gonzos touring the West on BMWs and a couple of times riding with outlaw motorcycle gangs) and cycle mag writer (where the boss finally understands).

"Motorcyclist" is still one of the things people who know me would list if asked to describe me, and that's OK with me.

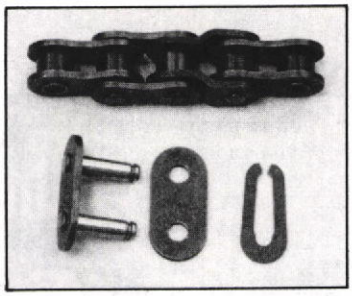
So, when I look at a bike, I don't just see CCs and BHP and MPH and $$$, I see some of the best times of my life.

—Dan Sorenson

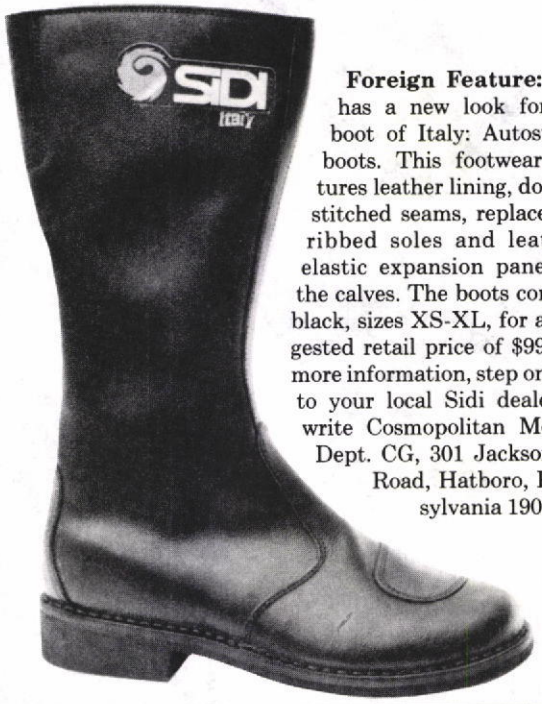
Motomart *Order before midnight tonight.*



Supporting Role: Tired of using your own two legs as a shop stand? Ontario Moto Tech's Workstand is designed to hold your bike more securely than wobbly knees, crates or jackstands. The stand features welded construction, heavy-duty wheels and a powder-coat finish. Ontario claims the stand fits most current bikes with rectangular or square-section swingarms. Suggested retail price is $98.50. Standard information is available from your local dealer or Ontario Moto Tech Corp., Dept. CG, 6850 Vineland Ave., Unit 16, North Hollywood, California 91605.



Short Subject: If the chain length on your dirtbike consistently comes up close, but no cigar, check out the offset-link kit for Tsubaki's 520 QR Pro Series chain. A half link is riveted to a three-link section of chain, which allows you to shorten or lengthen the chain in half-link increments. The kit has a $4.50 suggested retail price. Link up for more details from UST Inc., Dept. CG, 12275 E. Slauson Ave., Whittier, California 90606.



Foreign Feature: Sidi has a new look for the boot of Italy: Autostrada boots. This footwear features leather lining, double-stitched seams, replaceable, ribbed soles and leather/elastic expansion panels at the calves. The boots come in black, sizes XS-XL, for a suggested retail price of $99. For more information, step on over to your local Sidi dealer, or write Cosmopolitan Motors, Dept. CG, 301 Jacksonville Road, Hatboro, Pennsylvania 19040.

Sound Effects: Unimpressed with the sound of speed? Listen up. Arai's F-1 helmet fights wind noise and buffeting with a front spoiler, ear padding and a thick, tight-seal faceshield. DOT and Snell '85-approved, the F-1 also includes a closable front vent, a crown scoop and a perspiration-absorbing liner. The F-1 comes in sizes S-XXL; solid colors retail for $226.95, and Spencer, Schwantz and Merkel signature designs sell for $233. For details, sound out your local dealer or Arai Helmets Ltd., Dept. CG, P.O. Box 421, Tenafly, New Jersey 07670.

Designer Leather: If your last jacket bombed out, consider Hondaline jackets, designed by Hein Gericke. The "bomber" look comes in black in sizes 35–50 for a $179 suggested retail price. The Tour-Sport (middle) with expandable shoulders and dual front zippers, comes in black in sizes 38–50 for $199. And the Super-Sport, black or blue with gray accents, features a long-cut back and foam-lined kidney belt in sizes 38–48 for $189. Further information on these Hondaline products is available from Honda dealers.

STOP FAST HOT-COLD WET or DRY with SBS

ASBESTOS FREE

The SBS pad's contribution to the tested bike's stopping capability rate them as more than mere stock replacement parts; in fact, you can consider them a genuine high performance modification.
Marc Cook — Cycle Guide, October 1985

Scandinavian Brake System's unique combination of carefully selected friction compounds are custom formulated for your motorcycle. The front wheel pads have high friction and the rear wheel pads have lower friction compounds for greater "feel" and control. These 100% asbestos-free compounds provide excellent heat dissipation and all-weather braking power.

Hot, cold, wet or dry, SBS disc brake pads deliver maximum performance for street/dirt motorcycles and ATV's.

SCANDINAVIAN BRAKE SYSTEMS DENMARK

The average price for a set of SBS pads is $15.00. For model fitment and ordering information, contact:
U.S. Master Distributor
Performance Machine, Inc.,
15520 Illinois Ave., P.O. Box 927
Paramount, CA USA 90723
(213) 634-6532

In Canada Contact:
Master Distributors:
Steen Hansen Racing Products
7003-104 Street
Edmonton, ALTA. T6H 2L8 Canada
(403) 435-4423
Motovan Motorsport Inc.
10770 Avenue Edger
Montreal Nord - Quebec, Canada HG1 4Z8
(514) 324-1290

LETTERS

Frog flak, suspended sentence, and one-upmanship.

FUTURE SHOCK

I opened my copy of TV Guide today only to find it was really CYCLE GUIDE I was looking at. What threw me was the cover picture of Rosie, faithful robot maid of George and Jane Jetson. There were the same two big round eyes, the little rectangular mouth, skinny arms and those little wheels she rolls around on. I also thought I saw Elroy climbing around in the back trying to find something.

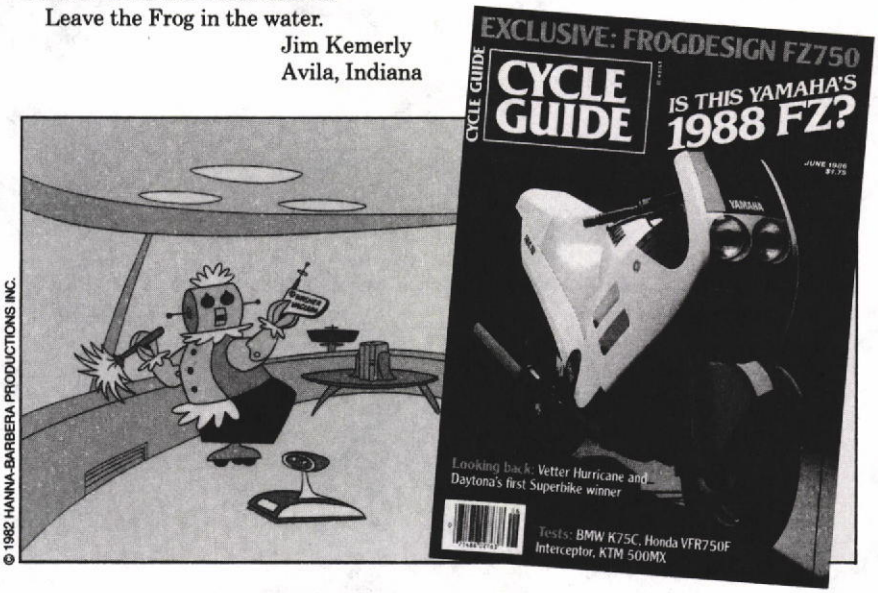
Chuck Lynch
Franklin, Tennessee

It might have been Rosie you saw on the cover, but not Elroy—he was out road-testing that day—ed.

POND-EROUS THINKING

Leave the Frog in the water.

Jim Kemerly
Avila, Indiana


EXCLUSIVE: FROGDESIGN FZ750
CYCLE GUIDE
CYCLE GUIDE
IS THIS YAMAHA'S 1988 FZ?
Looking back: Vetter Hurricane and Daytona's first Superbike winner
Tests: BMW K75C, Honda VFR750F Interceptor, KTM 500MX

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YOU GOTTA READ THE WORDS!

I got my new CYCLE GUIDE the other day and went right to "Clash of the Titans." It made me sick to see the so-called road test of touring bikes ridden one-up by pseudo-racers making comments about the various bikes. Where is the passenger's input? How far did Andrea King go on the tour? I hope next time you won't have a book full of pictures of big bikes ridden one-up.

Kenneth Harlan
San Juan Bautista, California

The passenger's input was on page 37; King was along for the whole six-day, 2500-mile trip; and the photos were taken after the tour—ed.

PLAIN SPEAKING

Please clarify the reasons if it isn't true that motorcycles that had a cage that was attached to the frame of the bike for the rider to occupy while riding to prevent being thrown from it would be other than a practical method to reduce the hazard of riding a motorcycle even when wearing a helmet nothing exists to prevent the neck being broken when a collision occurs because isn't it true that this would eliminate the possibility of being thrown from the cycle if this idea is practical please clarify the reason manufacturers would be other than eager to utilize it because isn't it true that it would improve their products' marketability? Thank you.

John Simanton
Ashland, Ohio

You're more than welcome—ed.

SEE HERE, NOW

In your May issue, Jeff Smith talks about not treating motorcycles like toys—taking them seriously and dressing for survival. Later in the same issue, there's a test of the TT350 showing a rider with no eye protection. I find a distinct contradiction here. The rider on the Yamaha ought to be educated, and CG should watch this sort of thing in the future.

Glenn Lightner
Wabash, Indiana

We'll keep our eyes open for it—and we'll wear goggles over them in the meantime—ed.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Your May 1986 issue contains an editorial about survival and the importance of dressing safely—followed by two photos of your tester, on a Yamaha TT350, wearing no eye protection. Is he

LETTERS

really that stupid and/or careless? Are you always so inconsistent? What gives?

Carl Young
York, Pennsylvania

NO CONTEST

I bought the May 1986 issue to subscribe to CYCLE GUIDE and also to enter your Sweepstakes. But after filling out the subscription card, I noticed a couple of problems. First, none of the bikes offered qualify as "the bike of my dreams." Second, even though CG is on practically every newsstand in Canada, the sweepstakes is only open to U.S. residents. Why don't Canadians qualify for the contest?

Daniel MacDougall
Nova Scotia, Canada

Take it up with Mr. Reagan, not us—ed.

SCOOTER TRASH

I submit that the scooterists to whom Jeff Smith refers (May 1986) are *not* the progeny of the true converts of the Church of Two Wheels, but rather those of the ignorant heathens who have always muddied our waters. They're the product of both the non-motorcycling populace and the ex-rider who failed to learn from his mistakes. We baby boomers who continue to ride will do so because we understand the gospel of the motorcycle industry: "Get smart."

Andre Espaillet
Kemp, Texas

POETIC JUSTICE

I applaud Jeff Smith's "Quo Vadis" in the May 1986 issue. Although some may know that "this is the way the world will end, not with a bang but a whimper" how many of your cycle trash have even *heard* of T.S. Eliot? (Wasn't he Auntie Em's nephew?) Be that as it may, it was one helluva fine article for us of the cycle intelligentsia.

Nicholas O'Neill
RAF Lakenheath
England

And the rest are simply hollow men, eh?—ed.

STROKE JOB

In reference to Rahn Walling's letter in your June 1986 issue correcting Jerry Smith on the displacement of the Chevrolet V-8 engine—may I correct Mr. Walling? Chevy's 350 cubic inch engines have a 4.0-inch bore and a *3.48*-inch stroke, for a total displacement of 349.85 cubic inches, not a 3.5-inch stroke and 351.86-cubic-inch displacement as Mr. Walling stated.

Troy Whatley
Plano, Texas

All letters must include the writer's name and address. Letters will be edited for length. Due to the volume of mail received, we regret we are unable to give personal responses.

Questions or comments? You can talk with the CYCLE GUIDE staff by calling (213) 328-5700. Phones will be answered Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.—5 p.m., Pacific Standard Time.

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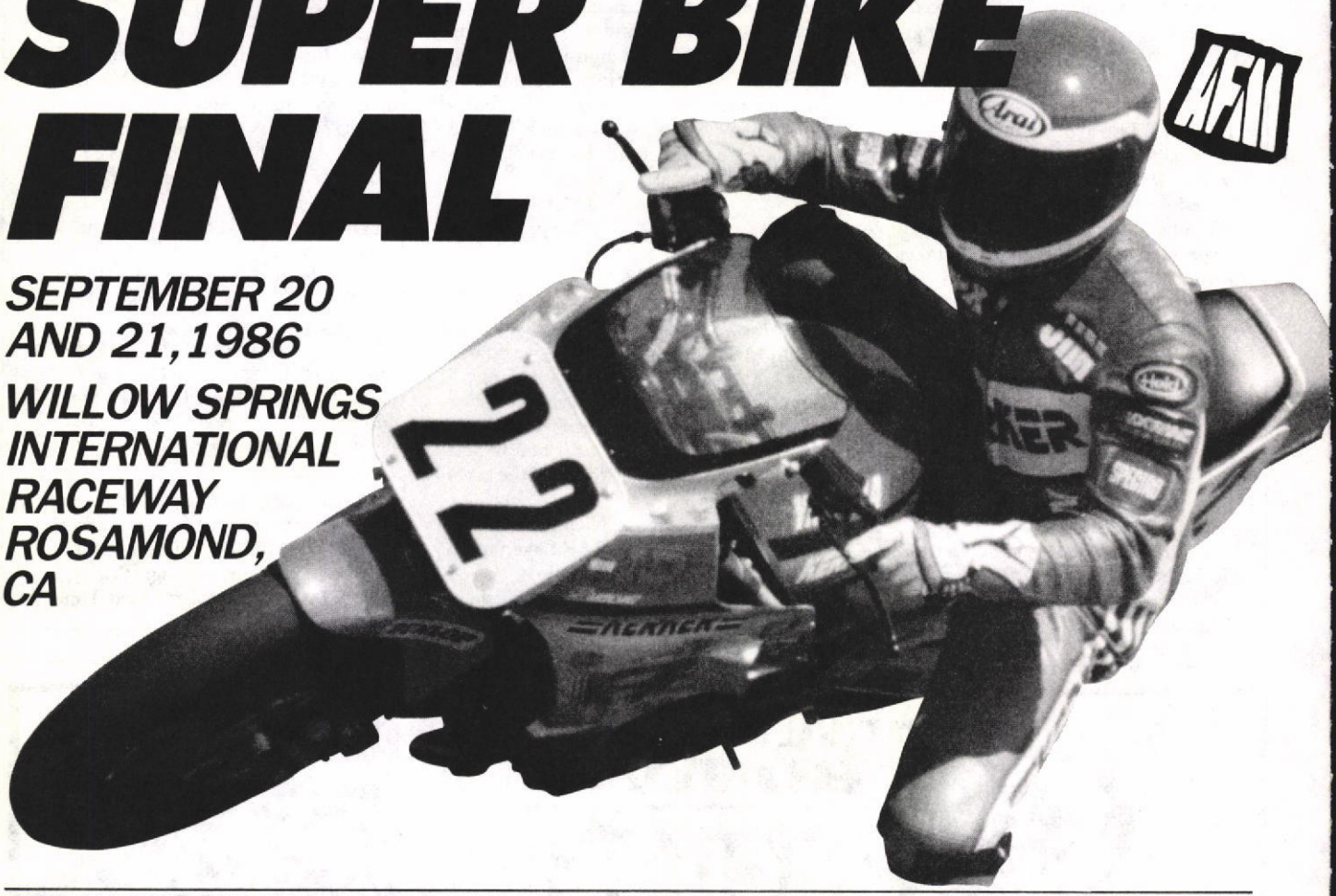

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SILVER BULLET AWARDS:

THE BEST OF 1986

Gleaming examples of the best in two-wheel technology.

BY JIM MILLER

BIKE OF THE YEAR

Well, it's time to start another rash of arguments, because once again we've puffed out our chests, cast any humility aside and assembled the 1986 edition of picks and pans for CYCLE GUIDE's Motorcycle of the Year Awards. And once again this year's contest for the cloak of chrome was hotter than a Death Valley summer. But after the debate had cooled down and the dust settled, we'd hammered out a selection of 10 bikes whose significance rated them a special mention in this edition of our Silver Bullet Awards.

Of course, the number of bikes listed here is irrelevant. We've never limited ourselves to a specific number of bikes, or to such artificial restrictions as categories; if you're looking for Best Performance From a Heavyweight Tourer, look elsewhere. Likewise, the fact that we've chosen 10 motorcycles to represent the best of the sport is sheer coincidence—we could just as easily chosen nine, 11, or 20, for that matter.

More important, only one of the chosen few can pull down top honors. The glistening finish is reserved for the one bike that mirrors the best this industry has to offer, the single example that reflects genuine progress in motorcycling's evolution. So while the others in this two-wheel coterie deserve mention, there's only one whose brilliance rates the chrome. And to the victor goes the foil.

So break out the paper and writing implements, because we've just sparked another round of fist-pounding argument. And keep in mind that all that glitters isn't gold—in this case, of course, it's chrome. •

Continued

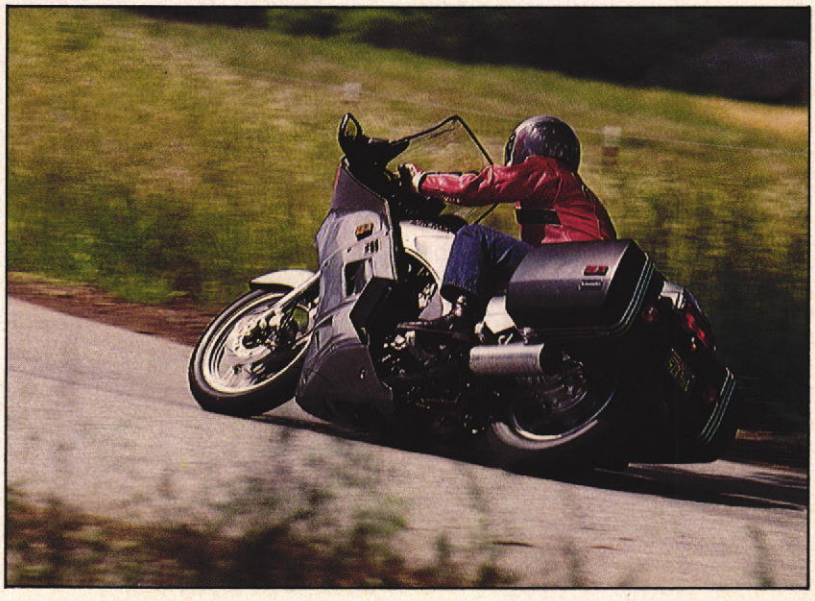
PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 DAVID DEWHURST

Kawasaki Concours

Consider it a sportbike with a chrome top hat and tails.

• It seems every year the fight for the cloak of chrome gets tougher. All-around excellence or front-line performance won't qualify for consideration—or even an honorable mention in the lunchroom. Once again, the deciding factor becomes what the bike means to the industry, and under those conditions, the Kawasaki Concours takes the cloak, hands down.

No doubt, there are some who think the Concours breaks no new ground—after all, Honda's CBX trod this path five years ago, and the RS BMWs were considered the definitive sport-tourers even before then. But none of those bikes approaches sport-touring in the same manner as the Kawasaki; stripped of its hard bags and full-fairing, the Concours qualifies as an upstanding sportbike. Its handling can unwind the knottiest bit of two-lane blacktop and its sticky Dunlop radials represent state of the art in *sporting* foot-



wear. Moreover, the tourer's tractorlike motor can enable the Concours to put the moves on straight-up sportbikes, yet doesn't hobble its rider with a top-weighted powerband.

While the Concours' sporting credentials are certainly up to snuff, its touring accoutrements are nothing to sneeze at, either. Not only does the bike come equipped with a full complement of removable hard saddlebags (with soft liners, a tankbag and duffel as options) but it also offers a first-class fairing. Moreover, the Concours' *de rigueur* shaft-drive provides some of the best road manners yet in an all-gear drive, with little of the shaft jacking to compromise its performances as a *sport*-tourer.

That's precisely the emphasis Kawasaki placed on the Concours—it is, as the company contends, a sportbike with luggage. If you're looking for a competent Interstate droner, look elsewhere. The bike's pronounced sporting bias includes a crouched riding position, while its too-short windshield, with its accompanying wind-buffeting, will drive Superslab-touring riders to distraction.

But Kawasaki has other touring bikes to satisfy those riders, and that lineup allows the company to make the Concours what it is: a civilized sportbike, one whose twisty-road ability isn't limited to afternoon stints or state lines. Moreover, Kawasaki designed the Concours with the same single-purpose approach that's made the company's sportbikes such frontline motorcycles. And it's that approach that makes this bike so successful—and so important. So call the Concours what you will: a sport-tourer, a sportbike with luggage or a civilized sportbike. We call it the Bike of the Year. ●

Honda VFR750 Interceptor

• This year's Silver Bullet Awards mark a reunion of sorts, because returning to the list of winners is the original Silver Bullet: Honda's 750 Interceptor. It's a reunion in name only, of course, because this year's 750 Honda is an all-new, aluminum-frame, 748cc vee-four sporter that seemingly shares little but name with its famous progenitor.

Honda's latest sporting 750 shares more with the company's World Endurance Championship Winner, the RVF750, than it does with the original VF750. The company scrapped the original Interceptor engine design and replaced it with an all-new vee-four with a 180-degree crankshaft, reworked valvetrain and gear-driven camshafts. Showcasing this new powerplant is an equally reworked aluminum frame lifted almost directly from Joey Dunlop's Isle of Man winner.

What the VFR promises on paper it delivers on pavement, too. The trademark Honda vee-four idle-to-redline powerband combines with laser-accurate tracking to make the VFR seem only a set of slicks away from the racetrack. Finished with impeccable street manners, the Interceptor seems as well-polished as a William F. Buckley monograph.

Still, in that respect, the latest Interceptor isn't so different from the original. Furthermore, both bikes represent the current fashion in the design of sporting hardware: Take the best *racing* machine you can devise, then put it on the street with as few compromises as possible. The result of that thinking produced one other similarity—just as it was in 1983, the best sporting 750 you can buy is still called an Interceptor. —*Jim Miller*

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 DAVID DEWHURST

ATK 560

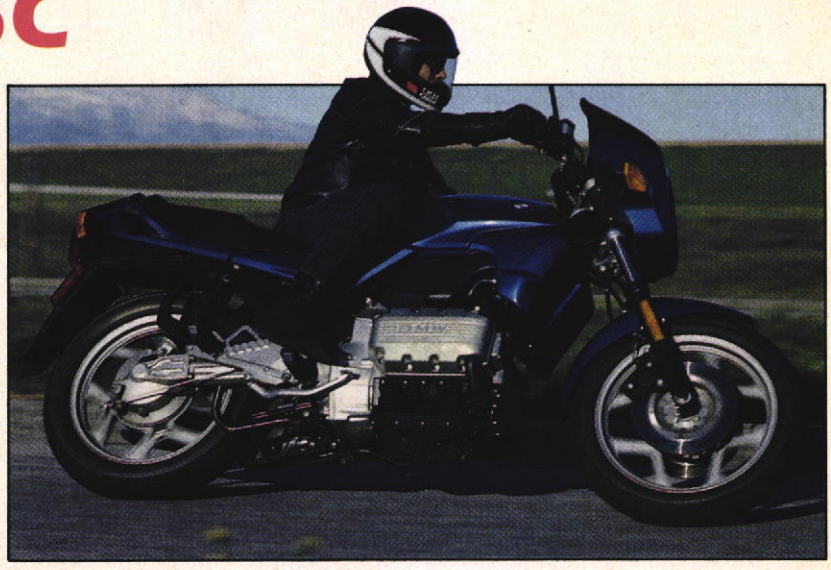
• You probably won't find ATK Motorcycles in the Fortune 500, and compared to the Japanese or European manufacturers, the California-based firm causes scarcely a blip on motorcycling's sales charts. But in the world of four-stroke dirt machines, ATK's super-expensive, Rotax-powered ATK 560 is sending out 560cc-sized shock waves.

There's more to the 560 than its string of desert and motocross victories—and a surprising showing by Warren Reid at this year's Ascot TT—that earns the bike its slot here. That's because the ATK 560 isn't some factory one-off that's been carefully massaged by a team of engineers. No, sir; a race-ready ATK 560 can be had by anyone with $4890 and the urge to win races on the best four-stroke going.

If that sounds like a fortune for a dirt racer, consider that ATK not only has supplied the trick bits—like an upside-down fork, counter-shaft-mounted rear disc brake and an offset single-shock rear suspension—but the firm has also refined the bike to a competitive level. With the 560, it's simply not necessary to spend precious time and energy coaxing a four-stroke enduro mount into its racing clothes. Horst Leitner and crew have done the homework for you, and they're passing out lesson plans at the rate of about 12 examples per month. So while the 560 probably won't provide ATK with enough clout to pull off a motocross takeover, it's a sure bet that eyes from each manufacturer are looking at ATK—closely.

—Marc Cook

BMW K75C



• Two years ago, BMW's liquid-cooled, fuel-injected four-cylinder K100RS garnered top honors in the 1984 Silver Bullet Award. Shortly after the K100's introduction, the rumors cropped up about a 750cc *three-cylinder,* based on the 100's DOHC four. When the 3/4-liter triple finally made its debut, the K75 obviously rated a close look. We weren't disappointed.

Though it seems that by deleting one cylinder from the K100 BMW took the most expeditious route in creating the new 750, the K75 is far from an exercise in simple mechanical surgery. For starters, a new 120-degree crankshaft, coupled with a pair of balance weights on the redesigned layshaft, help make the triple as smooth as any 750 from the Orient. Further, a revised combustion chamber with a slightly higher compression ratio (11.0:1 vs. 10.2:1) boosts the 740cc motor's output to an even 100 horsepower per liter, up 10 from the 987cc four. One surprising similarity between the two, though, is that the width of the K75's powerband easily matches the K100's.

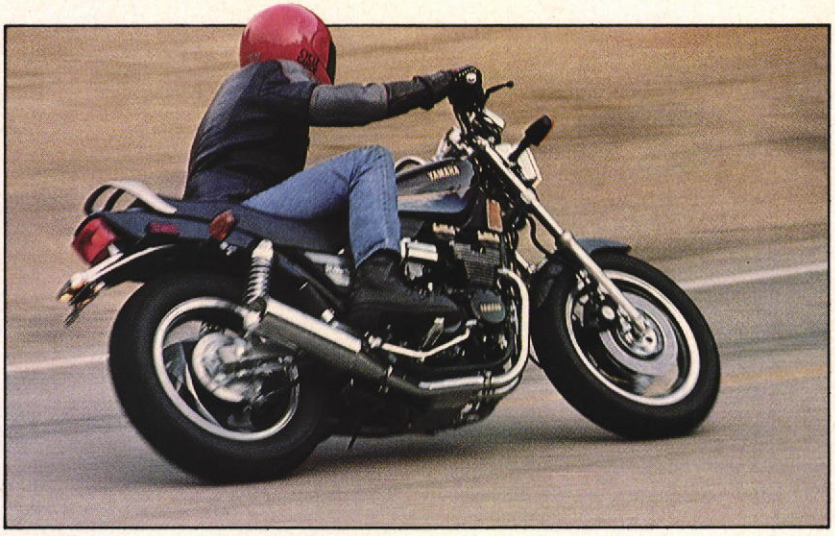
That powerband points up another important aspect of the K75—what BMW *didn't* change. Wheelbase, fork, brakes and transmission ratios are carried over from the larger bike, as is BMW's unique single-sided Monolever rear suspension. Despite those similarities, however, the smaller bike *feels* much lighter than its larger stablemate, far more than the mere 22-pound weight difference might suggest.

And it's the surprising results in the creation of the triple—the light steering and wide powerband, for instance—that make the K75 not only a better bike than the K100, but the best BMW yet.

—Jim Miller

Continued

Yamaha Radian



• Entry-level motorcycles are making a comeback this year, with each manufacturer showing renewed interest in securing the future of motorcycling by coaxing in new blood. The beginning of this renaissance came last year with Honda's Rebel, which shattered the image of the beginner bike as a second-class motorcycle. And the public responded—the Rebel was Honda's best-selling two-wheeler last year.

Yamaha has a different angle on the entry-level scheme, though, with its 598cc Radian. Traditionally, beginner bikes have been small-displacement lightweights, designed with docile manners as the first priority. With the Radian, however, Yamaha dispenses with the approach that requires an entry-level bike to be a lightweight, noting that many new riders buy 550s or even 700s for their first mount. The only shortcoming to that bigger-is-better approach has been price. Yet that's where the Radian comes on the strongest—with its $2399 price tag, the bike is a bargain.

What makes the Radian such a tremendous value is its level of standard equipment. Its air-cooled engine last saw duty in the FJ600—though for the Radian, it's been retuned for more low-end and midrange power—there are twin discs up front and meaty 16-inch tires front and rear. While those specs sound right at home on pricier machinery, it's rare to see such equipment on an entry-level bike, particularly one as inexpensive as the Radian. Better yet, the pieces work unusually well together. Many riders won't care what the Radian's supposed to be, or even what it costs, because more than being a bargain, it's a terrific *motorcycle.* —*Marc Cook*

Honda CR250R

• Change has long been a way of life in the motocross world, but change hasn't always meant improvement. In a sport in which "improved" sometimes simply means "different," benchmarks can be hard to find, but this year's Honda CR250R provides a lasting standard of comparison.

In typical MX fashion, though, the '86 CR250 *is* all-new. Starting with the motor Honda shuffled the bore dimensions, carburetor size and made the usual, year-to-year changes that qualify as a paint-and-tape in the MX world. Then the engineers dumped the powerband-enhancing ATAC system and replaced it with a Honda Power Port, an arrangement that uses a pair of horizontal guillotines to alter exhaust-port area and bolster the powerband. And while cynics might consider those changes as an engineering shell-game, the overall result is a motor with a powerband that runs from the first spark of combustion on up.

The chassis got the usual stem-to-stern alterations, too, including a fully adjustable rear suspension and a cartridge-type fork that qualifies as the best front suspension ever to grace a motocross bike. And if the rest of the CR's chassis can't meet the standards set by the motor and suspension, it's only because they've exhausted all of Roget's superlatives.

All of which makes the CR250R the current class standard-bearer, and 1986 one of the vintage years in motocross. And even though you can be sure next year's CR250 will be different, don't take any bets on it being better. —*Jim Miller*

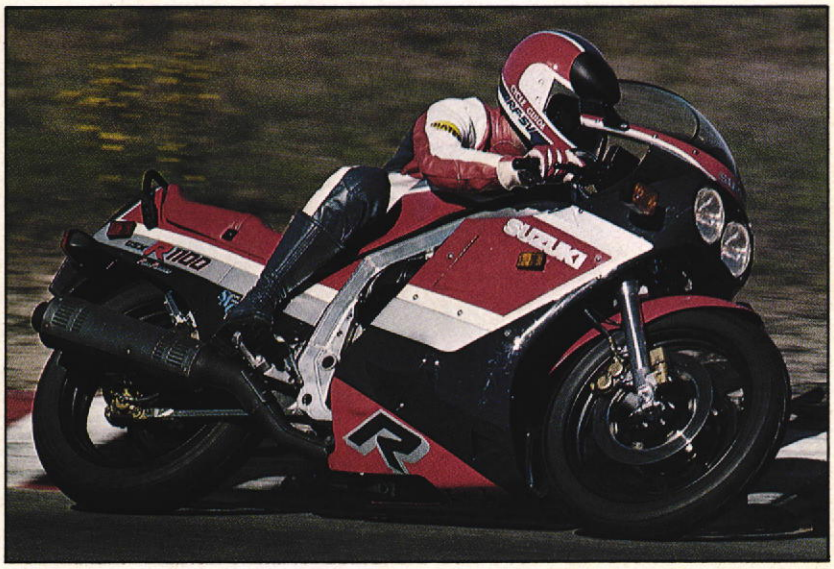
Kawasaki 250 Ninja

• Last year, Honda's Rebel demonstrated that entry-level machinery needn't be the motorized equivalent to a Mattel Big Wheel. This year, Kawasaki brings that demonstration home to the sporting crowd, with the latest member of the Ninja family, the EX250, a black-and-red pavement ripper.

The EX certainly hasn't been short-changed in specification. With 16-inch wheels, front and rear disc brakes, Uni-Trak rear suspension and a diamond-type frame, the littlest Ninja gives up nothing to its larger siblings. Likewise, its 248cc twin-cylinder engine bristles with high-performance hardware: close-ratio six-speed, dual overhead cams, four valves per cylinder and liquid-cooling. To that Ninja-traditional mix the 250 adds its own variations with chrome-moly connecting rods, a claimed 152 horsepower per liter and a positively stratospheric 14,000-rpm redline.

With that kind of horsepower, the 331-pound 250 has more than enough poke to keep its white, three-spoke cast-aluminum wheels spinning at an entertaining pace. Even with that, though, the diminutive Ninja's forte isn't straight-line speed. Like its forebears, the 250 is at its best skewing horizons enough to disorient a surveyor or inscribing a perfect arc through a corner with compasslike accuracy. And while you're busily charting a course that would challenge a hummingbird, you have to ask yourself: This is an entry-level bike? *—Jim Miller*

Suzuki GSX-R1100



• When it comes to sportbikes, horsepower and weight have seemed as inseparable as a pair of pubescent lovers. The worst sufferers of this dilemma have been the heavyweights, but this year, there's one exception: Suzuki's GSX-R1100.

At a svelte 472 pounds, Suzuki's heavy hitter weighs in close to what you might expect for a 750, yet its claimed 130 horsepower ensures the GSX-R1100 packs a heavyweight punch. In fact, those two figures combined to produce the best 1/4-mile numbers we've ever seen in our annual quest for speed at Baylands Raceway: 10.500 sec./130.81 mph. And with a top speed better than 150 mph, the GSX-R1100 guarantees there are few bikes that can stay with it on longer straights.

Still, as good as those numbers are, outrageous straightline performance is almost a given with bikes in this class. Even more, those bikes the GSX-R1100 can't outrun on the straights will find little advantage when the road starts weaving left and right. Yet even though the 1100's corner-carving ability places it near the front of its class, that's not what's placed it here.

What sets the GSX-R apart from the others is its unwavering, single-purpose stance. The 1100's design considers sporting ability as paramount and deems the only values worthwhile as those dictated by the racetrack: If it doesn't make it go faster, stop harder or corner better, you won't find it on the GSX-R1100. And the result of that approach is a motorcycle whose day-to-day civility might be compromised, but whose sporting ability is never in doubt. *—Jim Miller*

H-D XLH 883 Sportster

© 1986 STUDIO 10

• You have to give Harley credit; every year the boys from Milwaukee manage to come up with something extraordinary, something we didn't expect. The latest stroke of home-grown wisdom, however, might seem more like a lesson in applied economics than the next stride for the home team. Because more than ushering in the next-generation Sportsters, the XLH 883 represents Harley's realization that to stay afloat the firm will have to court non-Harley riders into the fold.

To get those riders, Harley needed a price leader: And at $3995, the 883 Sportster hits the showroom floor as the least expensive H-D—by a healthy margin. Harley lavished its best and newest technology on the 28-year-old vee-twin engine, giving it the same style of Evolution treatment as the 1338cc Big Twins got in 1984. To slash the price *and* infuse the bike with expensive new technology takes a fair amount of corporate fortitude, the kind H-D needs to stay competitive.

Still, the 883 inherited a few too many pieces from Sportsters of old—namely, the chain-drive, four-speed transmission and old-world chassis with its solid engine mounts. All of these holdovers keep the 883 from being the same great leap forward as the first crop of Evolution-engine bikes. Of course, reports say the 883's Evolution motor is just the beginning. Those wishing for the Big Twin's belt-drive, a five-speed, and rubber engine mounts might not have too long to wait—certainly not another 28 years. *—Marc Cook*

Kawasaki Voyager XII

• Get your field glasses out now, because a new breed in the turn-key touring class has just picked up the pace from a canter to a full gallop almost overnight. Most promising of this new blood is Kawasaki's Voyager XII—a bike that eschews the predominant bigger-is-better theme of this class, without feeling the least bit *stripped.*

That's a complete departure from Kawasaki's previous effort, the six-cylinder ZN1300 Voyager, too. With the XII, Kawasaki concentrated on getting the basic package right, and the efforts spent there are worthwhile. The Voyager XII provides all the necessary touring accoutrements—full fairing, high-tech cassette/radio and full-size luggage with removable liners. Plus, it possesses that elusive combination of agility and stability, and teams it with an engine that produces a smooth, strong, unbroken flow of horsepower with every twist of the throttle. The final product is a bike that takes to the long road the way a steeplechaser takes to fences.

But when you consider that this year's Voyager XII is this good right out of the gate, the picture changes. Because with a few detail changes and perhaps the addition of cruise-control, the XII could be the finest touring mount going, period. What this means to the remaining runners is that the class stakes have been raised, and the odds of the Kawasaki knocking the others out of the saddle in one fell swoop become something even a betting man would look twice at. So while Kawasaki's come charging down the front straight with a splended tourer, the firm has also set the stage for a real horse race next year. One that, you can bet, will come down to a photo finish. *—Marc Cook*

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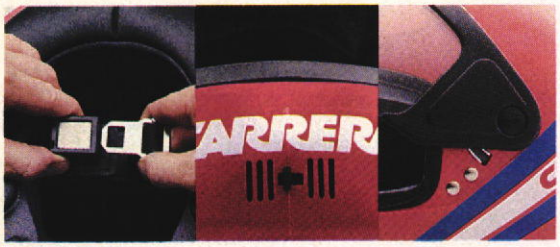

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GUIDE LINES

Cycle Guide's Monthly Chronicle of Scoops, Tips, Rumors and Hard Facts

BY LARRY WORKS

COMING SOON

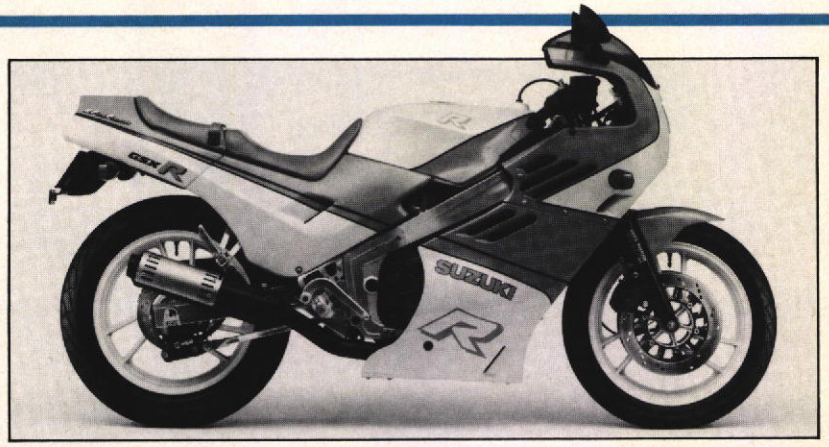
• Scaled-down superbikes are the unquestioned favorites of Japan's domestic motomarket, and they continue to erupt from the factories with remarkable frequency. For instance, Suzuki's '86 square-four RG400 Gamma barely had time to let the paint dry on its full race-type fairing, and already it's being challenged by a pair of hot new 400s. The unusual twist is that both of them are from Suzuki.

The two newestcomers are essentially similar in running gear, with the first, the GSX-400X Impulse, having been shaped by Hans Muth, the stylistic father of the Katanas. The same angular Katana lines are evident in the Impulse, which can also be had with a small fairing covering its girder headlight brace.

The other, this year's GSX-R400, is said to have been inspired by Yoshimura's F3 racer (Coming Soon, August 1985), and it undoubtedly looks the part. The replacement for last year's GSX-R is more than just a minor update to an existing model, though; its box-section aluminum frame and 398cc engine are new. New also is the designation SATCS (Suzuki Advanced Three-way Cooling System), Suzukispeak for the 400's cooling system, which employs conventional liquid-cooling, air-cooling and oil-cooling to control engine heat.

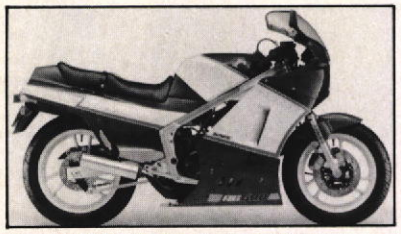
The GSX-R's new 16-valve, DOHC transverse-four differs from Suzuki's previous 400, with one more cam-support bearing (five instead of four), larger intake and exhaust valves, and a claimed peak output of 59 horsepower—enough to push the 333-pound machine to a 126-mph top speed. For the moment this new GSX-R is for home-market consumption only, but you never can tell. This just might be an advance showing of Suzuki's '87 line, somewhat downsized, of course. It wouldn't be a complete surprise to see this wrist-rocket recast as a half-liter speedster for U.S. sale in 1987.

• While the newest of the middleweight street warriors literally is new from the wheels up, with little to tie it to the previous GSX-R except a shared model designation, the same can't be said of the limited-edition Motorsport K100. Underneath its Pearl White paint, Motorsport pinstriping and tinted windscreen, aside from black highlights on the wheels, engine, drivetrain pieces, lies a K100RS. But this K-bike, which also includes a K75 fork brace and front fender, and Pirelli MP7R radials front and rear, has one other endearing feature: the double-distilled aroma of exclusivity.



GSX-R400 holds center stage in Japan's cutthroat midsize class—for the moment

Is a half-liter GSX Suzuki's next road act?

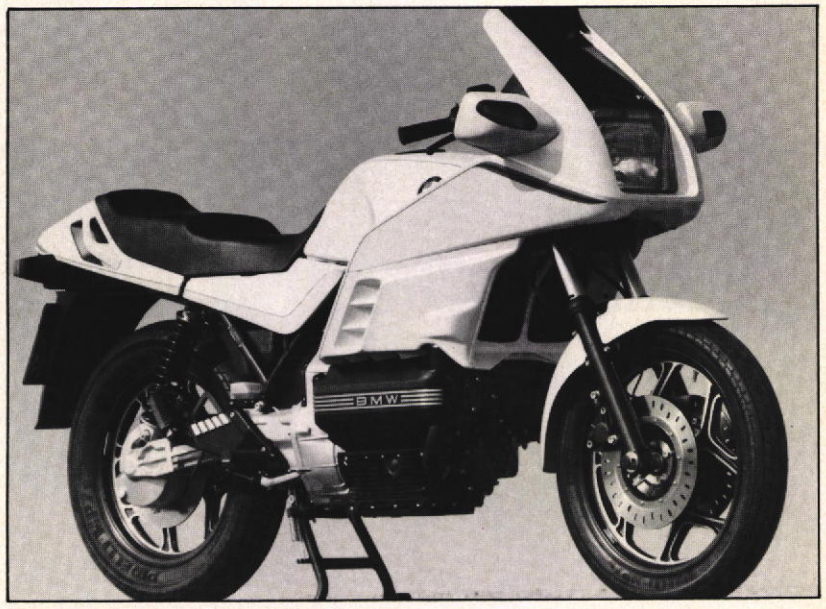


New RG400 is facing its first challenge

Always someone younger and faster.

GSX-400X shows familiar Katana lines

Muth's design, on Impulse.



Motorsport: Bavarian Cream in Pearl White

A concoction with rider/collector appeal.

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What better motorcycle to crisscross the American highways than a genuine American Classic? The torquey, air-cooled 1338cc V^2 motor is made for touring, all the way down to its belt final drive. From the Tour Glide's electro-pneumatic anti-dive to its state-of-the-art sound system, this is one classic that's kept pace with the times.

Suzuki Cavalcade LX

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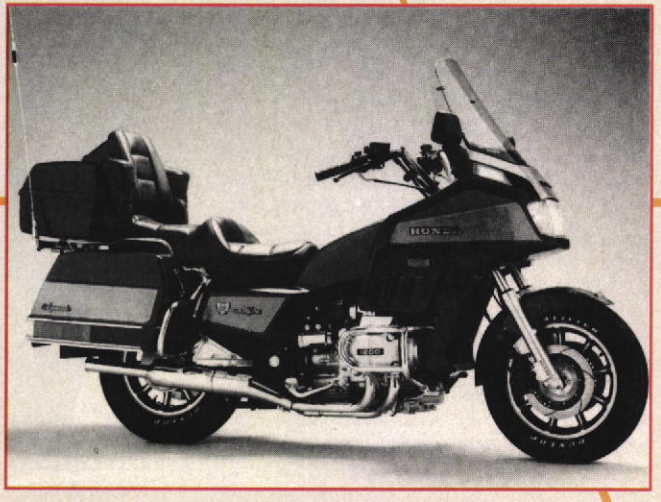

Honda GL1200A Aspencade

The Aspencade has been the standard of over-the-road comfort for years. The silky-smooth power delivery of its liquid-cooled 1182cc opposed-four engine is renowned in the world of luxo-touring. This is one motorcycle built to get you there in style, even if "there" is five states over.

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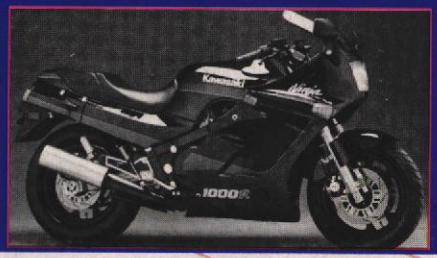


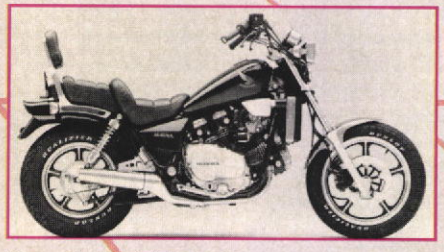
Kawasaki Ninja 1000R

You want to talk serious sportbikes? The Ninja's got your number: 10,500-rpm redline, 10.9- second quarter, and a 162-mph top speed. It's as close to a racer as you can get and still wear license plates.

BMW K100

This Continental classic is the stripped-for-action version of BMW's revolutionary K100 series. Its fuel-injected horizontal-four engine and Monolever suspension are German engineering at its finest.

3 SECOND PRIZES



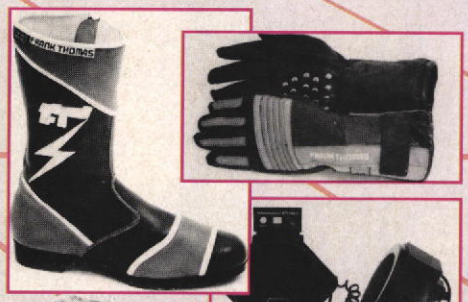
Honda VF700C Magna

A long, low custom with high performance built in. Here's one cruiser just as much at home on the open road as it is downtown.

5 THIRD PRIZES

Kawasaki KDX200

Straight from the crate, the KDX200 can handle everything from a deep-woods, expert-class enduro to just-for-grins playriding.



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FEDERAL CASES

• The anti-55 forces are working relentlessly for a nationwide un-limit, but it could be that the Double Nickel departs not with a loud, central bang, but as the victim of coordinated attrition on all sides. For instance, consider the erosive effect of a recent Minnesota law that will eliminate assigning license points for speeding violations between 55–65 mph in a 55-mph zone in that state. The law is scheduled to go into effect at the beginning of August.

• Another bit of erosion is taking place in Oregon, where insurance companies will no longer automatically receive reports on "fuel conservation" violations of the maximum speed limit. As a result of new legislation in that state, three such violations in a one-year period are now necessary before that information will be turned over to insurance companies.

• Of course, sometimes the erosion turns into a landslide, the kind that can move mountains. That's apparently the case in New Hampshire, where there's never been a 55-mph highway speed limit—not officially, at least. The Citizen's Coalition for Rational Traffic Laws reports that New Hampshire never formally adopted a *permanent* 55-mph speed limit, and a 1982 state Supreme Court ruled that the need for the Double Nickel stopped with the end of the '73–'74 fuel crunch. In fact, that state's legislature reportedly has four times rejected a formal establishment of a state maximum of 55 mph. Feel those mountains starting to shift?

• The big stick that's keeping states in nominal compliance with the Double Nickel is the threatened loss of federal highway funds. In the very near future, it will be decided whether or not to apply that blunt instrument to Vermont and Arizona, which studies have shown have the highest percentages of drivers who exceed the 55-mph limit. But even when use of the big stick is merely threatened, it makes a fearsome weapon. It recently prompted Nebraska's governor to veto a bill passed by that state's legislature that would have raised Nebraska's Interstate speed limit to 70 mph. The veto reportedly was signed in the face of the loss of $130 million in federal funds. Still, as more and more state legislatures continue to churn out repeal bills, it seems that the erosion of the Double Nickel is certain.

• That doesn't mean there aren't related setbacks, as Connecticut's SB221 demonstrates. The bill would have legalized use of radar detectors in that state, where their use has been banned for the past 24 years. The measure easily passed through that state's Joint Judiciary Committee, Senate, Transport Committee and Finance Committee. Finally, however, it died in a House vote, 77-71.

• While the question of how fast you can travel is attracting attention in the U.S. these days, the question of *stopping* seems paramount in Great Britain. Headlines and speculation on

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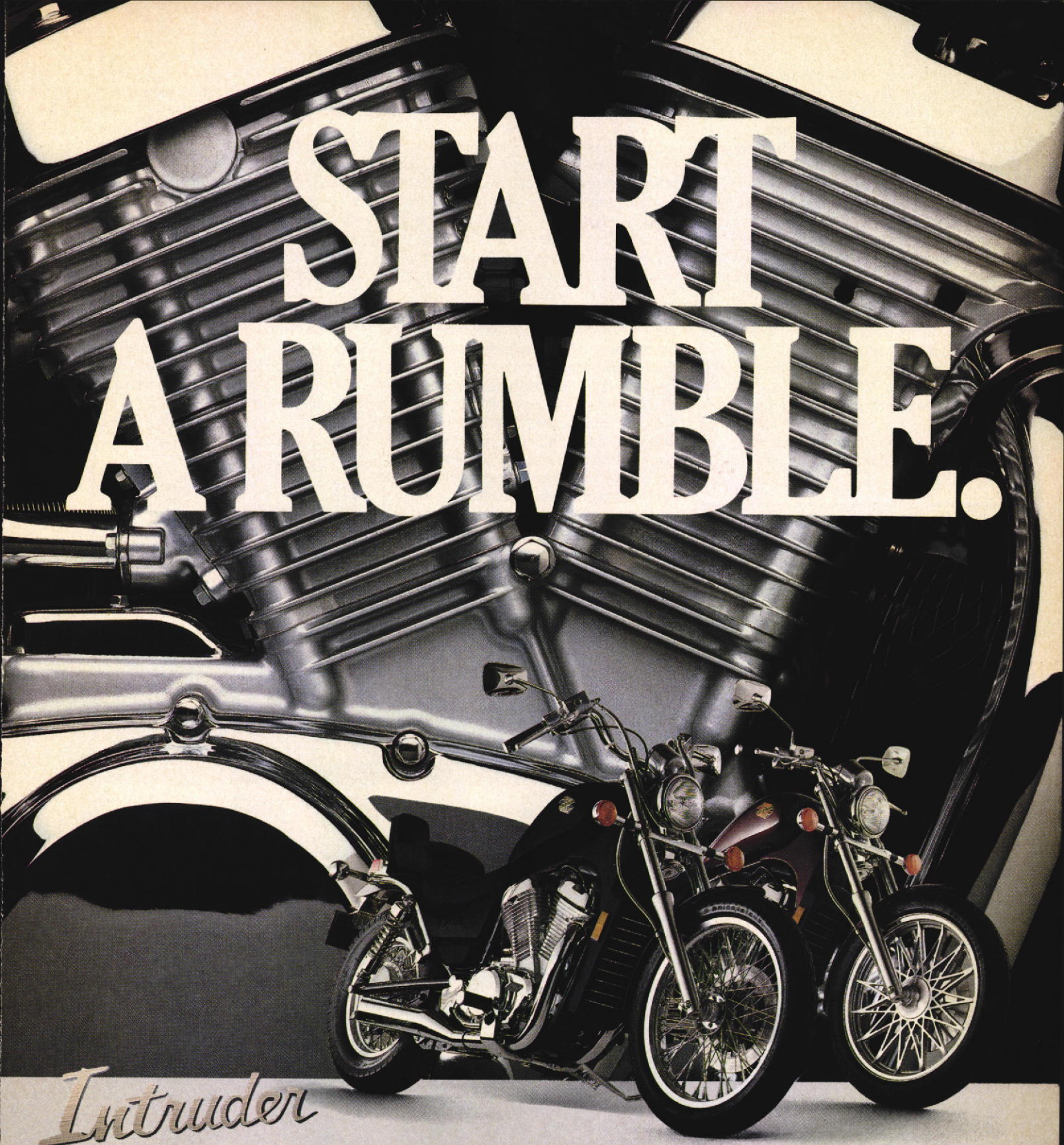

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British recommendations of anti-lock brake systems for motorcycles have escalated into purported mandates for anti-lock brakes on new models. The result seems unclear at this point—especially so, since no two-wheel anti-lock brake systems are commercially available—but a recently published government study should keep the issue hot. The new study reportedly shows that one-third of Britain's riders never use the front brake. The survey also reportedly claimed that braking errors are responsible for 4500 motorcycle accidents per year there, and that a 15 percent reduction in motorcycle accidents would follow if anti-lock brakes were required on all streetbikes in use throughout Great Britain.

• As a final—and somewhat ironic—note, consider that Italy, with a reported 17 helmet manufacturers, has never had a mandatory helmet law—until now. As of this summer, all riders in Italy will have to wear helmets, with the exception of mopedlers over age 19.

RUMORS

• Most of the rumors in the motorcycle world have the comfortable, built-in esthetic distance of the next model year. Some don't. For instance, the lead item this month is scheduled to appear not at some indistinct time in the next 12 months or so, but within a few weeks of the time you read this. Persistent rumors have been circulating about the liquid-cooled PROOF 2-000 becoming a production reality since the time Husqvarna first displayed the bike at the Milan Show. And Cagiva's buy-out of the Swedish bikebuilder did nothing but fan the flames on this hot bit of gossip. Whether the twin-cylinder PROOF pans out as popularly predicted remains to be seen, but you can bet the PROOF won't be the next waterpumper to issue from Ödeshög. Well-placed sources inside Husqvarna confirm the imminent arrival of liquid-cooled four-stroke 510TE and XC models, which are said to be being readied for a late-September arrival as early '87 models. You can practically hold your breath until this bit of could-be comes true.

• Liquid also forms the core of a heady bit of gossip about AGV. Contacts overseas report that AGV is close to perfecting a helmet with a fluid, self-shaping liner. The advantage isn't limited to having a perfect fit, however. Reportedly, the new design will allow helmets to be considerably thinner and nearly half the weight of current fiberglass designs, while allowing comparable levels of protection.

• Talk of Britain's newfound interest in anti-lock braking has the rumor mill burning up the trans-Atlantic phone lines, but so far the rumors are many and contradictory. Some sources say reports of mandatory anti-lock brakes on '86 models for British sale are wildly out of line, while others swear there's no stopping the British DOT's desire for anti-lock technology—despite the fact that commercial availablity of motorcycle anti-lock systems is as yet unestablished. In the wake of such furor there's talk that British bikebuilder Armstrong is said to be working on a new braking system, though at this point it's unclear if the system would be available for separate sale or solely for use on Armstrong bikes.

• Months ago we reported on a British-built Jawa-CZ 500 that was, the story went, to go on sale in Britain. It has. Essentially, the bike is the product of mounting a five-speed, single-cylinder Rotax motor in the chassis of a Jawa 350 twin. So why all the fuss over a new/old motorcycle for sale across the Atlantic?

Because the original bit of fluff from which the Jawa 500R coalesced included the side notes that passing EPA specs was reportedly a major design concern in manufacturing the bike, and that the bike was going to open the

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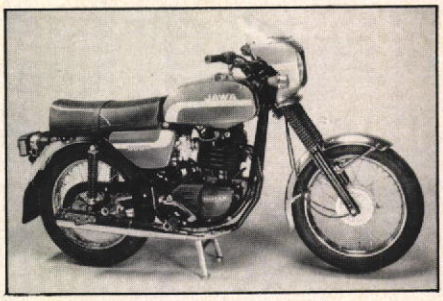

British-built Jawa a production reality

An oddly shaped doorjamb for the U.S.

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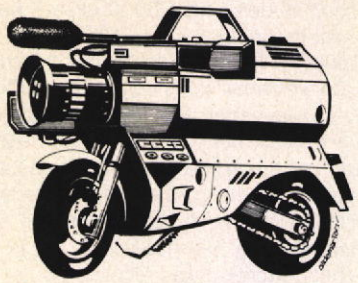

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• If you're building a tape library of motorcycling, plan on including "World Team Cup." Its "firsts" alone should qualify it as must-have material. To start with, the event was the first running of the World Team Cup finals in the United States. Denmark, Great Britain, Sweden and the U.S. competed, with prerace odds in favor of Denmark. But from the breaking of the first ribbon in this 16-race meeting, it was a too-close-to-predict battle between the Americans and the Danes, with the Swedes and Brits playing strictly spear-carriers.

As a measure of the seriousness of the racing, the track record at Long Beach, California's Veteran's Memorial Stadium was broken in 14 of the 16 heats. And the outcome was in doubt right up to the end. When the dust finally settled, it was the closest World Team Cup final ever, with Denmark taking home the trophy by a scant two points.

Excellent camera placement covers the 400-meter track, while effective slow-motion of the decisive moment of each heat benefits from the commentary of four-time World Speedway Champion Barry Briggs, who knows the inside of speedway like few men. The tape is edited tightly, too, with no awkward lapses between heats. As well, a halftime prerecorded spot with steel-shoe legend Ken Maely lends substance—not just filler—to the program. Add to that the fact that top-level speedway racing, in which the machines are so similar and everything depends on rider skill, seems custom-made to provide riveting video presentation.

"World Team Cup" was intended for U.S. cable TV, but a lack of sponsors limited its airing to British audiences. The fact that it wasn't shown here is no indicator of its quality, though. This isn't just great speedway, it's some of the best of motorized racing, period. —*Larry Works*

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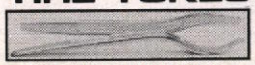

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GUIDE LINES *Continued*

door at the U.S. for a new half-liter twin. That all may well come to pass, because British and European sources have confirmed that evaluation models of the 500R already have been sent to the U.S.

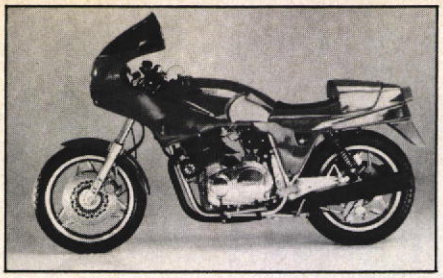
• And another old gob of gossip has surfaced again. Conversation continues on a new Moto Guzzi six-valve-per-cylinder engine design we rumored two months ago. The latest attributes of this not-so-idle chatter concern fuel-injected inline triples in 750cc and 1000cc displacements that might well see dealerships in the '87 model year. But while everyone's attention was focused on hexta-valved triples, another new Guzzi prototype was being studied on the sly. Our man in Italy reports on a new vee-four, said to be a replacement for the big Guzzi vee-twin. From his coat-closet vantage point, our source swears he glimpsed a fuel-injected, liquid-cooled 1000cc vee-four. And although the engineers' conversation was somewhat muffled by a large wool overcoat, our man says he heard that while the prototype has two valves per cylinder, the final version could well have a total of 16 valves.

• In one final update on an old tale that's making the rounds again, there are sketchy reports of a new Isle of Man-type single from Suzuki. This could prove to be little more than whimsy, but it supports an earlier story of a new 650 on the drawing boards at Suzuki—one with little or nothing in common with the new 650 Savage. The tag line to this story—and perhaps the most interesting part—is that both street and *racing* versions of the bike are said to be in the works. Now, this might be just a healthy dose of wishful thinking seasoned with a dash of nostalgia, but who knows? For the moment, only Suzuki.

HARD CASH

• Harley-Davidson continues to produce headlines, and not just with new models. The lead Hard Cash item in April was the early refinancing of a multimillion-dollar debt incurred during Harley's 1981 leveraged buyout from AMF. This month the Milwaukee-based Motor Company made the financial pages again by going public. In a statement made at press time, Harley-Davidson Inc. announced that it's filed registration statements with the SEC for a public offering of 1.43 million shares of common stock and an offering of $50 million in 10-year subordinated notes. Funds generated by the sale will be used, according to company spokemen, to reduce outstanding debt, to purchase warrants to acquire common stock of the company, to fund capital expenditures and to provide working capital.

• In another second look at a Hard Cash story, Laverda is back in the news. As reported in an August 1985 item, Laverda has been in voluntary receivership and under "controlled administration." Now, however, following a period of reorganization, Laverda is back in full production at its Breganze factory. Even so, that newfound vitality doesn't ensure that



Reorganized Laverda back in full swing

With new U.S. distribution to follow?

Laverdas will begin an uninterrupted flow to the U.S. Reportedly, the high cost of EPA certification has put U.S. sale of new models on hold. With full production, however, EPA certification and renewed U.S. sale are said to be under serious consideration once more.

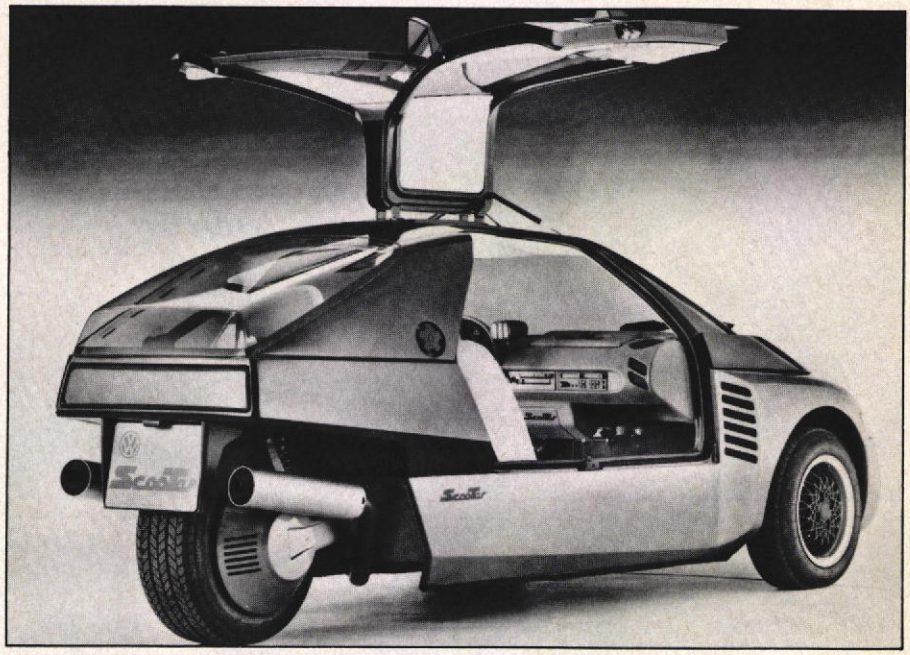
AFTER THE FACT

• First, don't waste any time pestering Suzuki dealers to buy a Calvacade. They don't have them. No one has them, except us, and we've got more than we want. The model you want is the Cavalcade, Suzuki's turn-key tourer. That was the model we wanted, too, on the cover of the May issue. Unfortunately, we didn't get it. What we got was a few transposed letters. And with typos, those twisted characters of type that spring up when no one's looking—and often when they are— the bigger they are, the more embarrassing they are.

• And speaking of bigger, they don't come much bigger than Kawasaki's KZ1300 Voyager. But ever since the '86 introduction of the 1196cc Voyager XII (Coming Soon, March 1986), there's been talk—some of it semiofficial—that the 1300 would be discontinued after the '86 model year. The latest word on the subject, though, is that, big as they are, there's room for both the 1300 and the XII in Kawasaki's line—at least for 1987.

• Last month's rumor column led off with an item on the new Scooter from Volkswagen that was unveiled at the Geneva Motor Salon.

Continued



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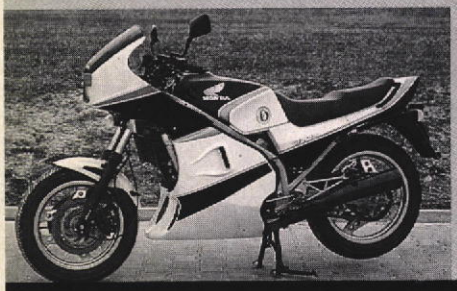

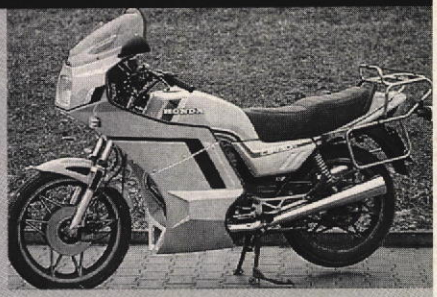

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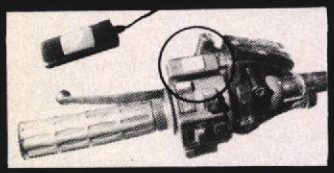

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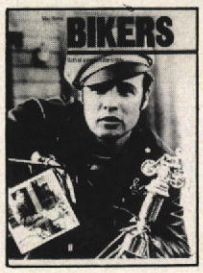
Book Review



Bikers
Birth of a Modern Day Outlaw
by Maz Harris
128 pages, $9.95
Faber and Faber
39 Thompson St.
Winchester, Massachusetts 01890

• The problem with a definitive history of outlaw bikers is how to put writer and information together. Most attempts have been from outsiders with no way to evaluate what they see, or from insiders who couldn't make the story available to a non-biker readership.

Therein lies the promise of "Bikers." Its author is not only a card-carrying Hells Angel, bloke division, he's a sociologist working on a Ph.D.

Unfortunately, Harris apparently views the development of post-World War II society as *entirely* a product and a producer of outlaw motorcyclists. To top it off, he includes every trite, symbolic reference to motorcycle clubs, variously comparing outlaw bikers to cowboys, American Indians, gangsters, Vikings, a mobile nation and to Hitler's shock troops.

That's heady stuff, but is it just PR puffery? After labeling motorcycle gangs as *the* dominant postwar subculture, Harris defines motorcycle outlawry as purely a creature of media hype—movies, news accounts and advertising. While Harris ridicules magazine reportage of early biker gatherings, he's perfectly willing to praise movies, both "The Wild One" and "Easy Rider," as *good* media hype. But had either film been the social force that Harris claims, we'd all be in studs and Captain America helmets right now.

Sandwiched between a spare 38 pages of text are 139 uncaptioned B/W photos that look to be a combination of personal snapshots and movie stills; the point seems to be missing, though. Compared to the average sitcom-variety punker, most of those people look about as lawless as a Young Republicans convention.

A wandering point plagues the rest of the book as well, which includes an eclectic collection of motorcycle poetry and song lyrics. In the end, Harris spends so much space condemning misinterpretations of the biker culture that he fails to put a handle on it himself. —*Larry Works*

Continued

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*100/90H19	$37.95	110/90H18	$43.95
*110/90H19	$44.95	130/80-18	$55.95
*RWL	add $10.00	*RWL	add $10.00

All products are also sold at our retail sales counter. Please let us know if you plan on stopping by our counter when checking on stock availability. Due to our tremendous volume items are at times in stock at our other warehouses but not available at our counter without prior arrangement.

If Its Made
If Its Quality
If Its Available

We have it in stock in at least one of our warehouses. No matter what your motorcycle needs, call us toll free and let us quote you a super price delivered to your door.

METZELER

ME-99 Rear		MR-33 Lazer Front	
+✓130/90V16	$60.88	✓100/80H16	$56.88
MT90H16RWL	$66.88	✓120/80V16	$63.88
* 140/90V16	$66.88	* 130/90H16	$65.88
+✓150/80V16	$72.88	✓100/80V18	$60.88
120/90V17	$62.88	✓110/90V18	$61.88
✓130/90V17	$64.88	* 120/90H18	$60.88
140/80V17	$69.88	MJ90H19RWL	$57.88
140/80V17 MBS RC	$93.49	✓325V19	$57.88
400V18	$54.88	✓350V19	$60.88
110/80H18	$64.88	ME-88 TOURING	
✓125/85V18	$60.88	* 150/90H15	$74.88
120/90V18	$60.88	* 130/90H16	$67.88
120/90V18 MBS Rc	$84.49	* MU90H16	$71.88
+✓130/80V18	$66.88	140/90H16	$70.88
150/70V18	$86.49	* 130/90H17	$69.88
MBS Race		* 120/90H18	$67.88
*Raised White Letters Add	$10.00	✓Race Compound add	$10.00
		+MBS Add	$25.00

Metzeler prices listed above are for our Retail Store only. Please call for mail order prices.

IRC

HS210 Rear		HS210 Front	
120/90H16	$39.50	110/90H18	$38.50
*120/90H16	$49.50	120/90H18RWL	$45.50
*140/90H16	$51.50	90/90H19	$39.50
*130/90H17	$49.50	*100/90H19	$41.50
120/90H18	$46.50		
130/90H18	$51.50	*RWL	Add $5.00

DURO TOUR

VS-17 Rear			
120/80V16	$48.88	130/80V18	$57.88
130/80V16	$57.88	Front	
130/80V17	$56.88	120/80V16	$49.88
120/80V18	$53.88	100/90V19	$49.88

HS310- Rear		Front	
140/90H15 RWL	$55.88	120/80H16 RWL	$45.88
150/90H15 RWL	$58.88	100/90H18	$43.88
120/90H16	$43.88	*110/90H18	$44.88
*130/90H16	$53.88	*100/90H19	$45.88
*130/90H17	$54.88	*RWL	add $3.00
*130/90H18	$55.88		

CARLISLE

TOURMAX		SPORTMAX	
MU90S-15BK	$59.50	120/80V16BW	$49.95
MU90S-15RWL	$64.50	130/90V-16BW	$55.95
MT90S-16BW	$69.50	140/90V-16BW	$58.95
MT90S-16RWL	$74.50	130/90V-17BW	$56.95
MU90S-16BW	$71.50	110/90V-18BW	$46.95
MU90S-16RWL	$76.50	120/90V-18BW	$52.95
MT90H-17BW	$65.50	130/90V-18BW	$58.95
MT90H-17RWL	$70.50	110/90V-19BW	$48.95
MP90H-18BW	$61.50	ARROW ST	
MP90H-18RWL	$66.50	120/90H-18BW	$43.95
MR90H-18BW	$63.50	90/90H-19BW	$42.95
MR90H-18RWL	$68.50	100/90H-19BW	$42.95
MM90H-19BW	$55.50	130/80S-16BW	$45.95
MM90H-19RWL	$60.50	130/100A-16BW	$48.95
		120/80H-17BW	$41.95
ARROW STS		140/80H-17BW	$46.95
MT90-16BW	$58.95	110/80H-18BW	$43.95
MT90-16RWL	$63.95	130/80H-18BW	$44.95
MJ90-19BW	$48.95	MP90-18TBW	$52.95
MJ90-19RWL	$53.95	MM90-19TBW	$46.95

ARROW STG, STL, STR

MT90-16BWSTG	$59.95
MT90-16DWWSTG	$65.95
MT90-16WWWSTG	$66.95
MT90-16BWSTL	$64.95
MT90-16WSWSTL	$71.95
MH90-21BWSTR	$45.95

Avon

Super Venom Am 18

110/90V16	$68.88
120/80V16	$71.88
130/90V16	$78.88
150/80V16	$96.88
130/90V17	$81.88
110/90V18	$72.88
120/80V18	$72.88
120/90V18	$74.88
130/80V18	$79.88
140/70V18	$94.88
110/90V19	65.88

Competition Accessories, Inc.

1944 U.S. 68 North, Xenia, Ohio 45385

Our 26th Year Serving You

TeleCheck · MasterCard · VISA

NOTICE! For your's and our protection, we validate all charge card transactions through "Tele-Card Security Systems."

NEW

TOLL FREE 1-800-543-3535

Ohio Callers Dial Toll FREE 1-800-252-3131

To order - check on availability - fit - price - our opinion and recommendations, etc. We now have 20 incoming lines.

FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE CALL 1-513-372-6621, 9-5 Mon.-Fri.

PHONE HOURS: Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Fri., Sat., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; CLOSED SUNDAY

NEW POLICIES

*C.O.D. orders accepted top Qualified Customers or if accompanied with Money Order for 20% deposit. C.O.D. Handling Charge $5.00.
*2% Discount on mail-in order accompanied with full payment by personal check OR
*5% Discount on mail-in order accompanied with full payment by money order.
*Sorry, we cannot honor these discounts at our retail counter

- We stock the largest variety of your motorcycling needs in the U.S.A.
- No matter what your motorcycling needs may be call us TOLL—FREE for a favorable price quote.
- We sell almost any name brand cycle accessory.
- We have no minimum order.
- We have the best prices - Try Us!
- Ohio Residents - Please add 5.5% sales tax.

(Ohio residents please keep in mind that money orders mailed in receive 5% discount, which virtually offsets sales tax.)

COUNTER HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Closed Wednesday & Sunday.)

EARN YOURSELF AN EXTRA 5% DISCOUNT. . . SEE ABOVE BOX FOR DETAILS

Before you rush to another supplier for a few cents savings, don't forget our 5% mail in discount offer. This plus all the other discounts we offer equal a much greater savings.

FREE FREIGHT APO/FPO/AK/HI and others add freight.

NOTICE

We try to be aware of all our legitimate competitors prices. We make every possible effort to be competitive in today's Motorcycle Accessories Market. If by any chance you find a printed price lower than ours, please inform us of this matter; simply call us on our toll free lines. Our sales manager will gladly review the costs and our pricing on the item. You will find we do want your business both now and in the future.

FREE FREIGHT

Dry Rider

VETTER
Windjammer, Lowers, Rooster, Quicksilver, Ghost, Saddlebags, Tail Trunk, Ultra Sounds, Cruise, Interbike, Vetterlite, Fiber 100,200,300
OUR VETTER PRICES ARE TOO LOW TO ADVERTISE. CALL!!!

Silhouette Cruiser	$99.95
Vetter Fairing Cover	$26.95

SUPER SAVER SPECIALS

Vetter Bullet	$69.95
Vetter Sting	$69.95

RIFLE

Sport	$188.95
Superbike	$142.95
Handflares	$19.50
Nightflight	$93.95

PLEXIFAIRING

III CLEAR $82.50 III TINT $86.50
Stripe Kit $12.95
Plexibag $19.95
Plexistar II CLEAR $62.50 TINT $66.50
Deflector Screen
*CLEAR $30.50 *TINT $35.50
*Lexan Deflector add $20.00
Agressor
Lt. Smoke $69.95 Black $74.95
Mirage Solar $79.95 Bronze $84.95
Audio Cannon $143.95 and up

TRACY

2000	$119.50
2001 / 2002	$174.50
Stiletto Solar	$89.50
Stiletto Gradient	$99.50
Roadwarrior Solar	$109.50
Roadwarrior Gradient	$119.50

Clutetsche

Quartz H/L	22.95
100/55 Bulb	$13.50
60/55 Bulb	$5.95
100/90 Bulb	$16.95

GRAB ON — STD $5.79, Deluxe $14.95

KG — LUGGAGE RACK w/adj. Backrest $99.50

S100 — TOTAL CYCLE CLEANER $10.49

eclipse USA

Electric Vest	$79.25
Electric Chaps	$64.25
Tank Bag, Blk, Br.	$64.25
Express Bag	$49.25
Sport Pack, Blk.	$79.50
Saddlepacks Dx., Blk	$159.25
Saddlepacks Std., Blk	$114.25
Roughrider S.B.	$72.25
Tail Pack, Blk., Gray	$49.50
Fast Pack	$58.25
Shoulder Strap / Luggage	$9.50
Backpack Strap	$9.50
Helmet Bra	$11.88
Cargo Bra	$11.88
Wingpack	$49.25
Tour Duffel	$56.25
All Season Gauntlet	$24.50
Deluxe Gauntlet	$32.50
Vent Back Gloves	$18.50
Super Sport Gloves	$21.50

BagMan

Premier Saddlebags	$122.50
Saddlebags	$93.50
Santa Fe Saddlebags	$78.95
14L Tank Bag	$58.50
18L Tank Bag	$64.50
Rack/Seat Bag	$49.50
Combo Bag	$28.50
Santa Fe Tank Bag	$89.95
Santa Fe Ditty Bag	$18.95
Hi-Tech Tank Bag	$75.95
Hi-Tech Saddlebags	$159.95

CHASE HARPER

750	$44.95
1150	$64.95
1500	$79.95
Aero Pac Tank Bag	$35.95
ET 4000	$118.95
Aero Pac Saddlebags	$88.95
Hideaway Saddlebags	$54.95
Aeropac Tail Trunk	$54.95
Hideaway Tail Trunk	$28.95
Briefcase	$54.95
Saddlebag Raincovers	$10.95

LIBERTY

Radar Detector $269.50

maxon ELECTRONICS

HI Intercom	$58.25
HR Intercom	$73.25
RDI Supernet Radar Detector	$129.95

COBRA — Alarm-Blk $49.88, Pager $114.50, Sensor Kit $26.95

Frank Thomas · MARSEE · mikuni · PICHLER · ACCEL

If Its Made
- - - - -
If Its Quality
- - - - -
If Its Available
- - - - -

We have it in stock in at least one of our warehouses. No matter what your motorcycle needs, call us toll free and let us quote you a super price delivered to your door.

KLOTZ · Avon · frey · daytona · amco · maxon ELECTRONICS · Silhouette · SIDI COMFORT CRAFT · YUASA

Before ordering your helmet, measure around head 1" above eyebrows and across largest portion of head in rear. If you have any questions. PLEASE CALL!!

BELL HELMETS

Star LTD 2	$123.50
Tour Star 2	$108.50
Magnum LTD	$86.50
RT 86	$72.50
GT Royale	$159.00
Roadstar 2	$96.50
M2 or M2 Lawson	$180.00
Moto 3 Pro	$117.50
Moto 4	$136.50
GT 2 Solid	$148.00
GT 2 Multi	$168.00
Pro Star	$159.50
Sport	$89.50

Marushin

VT910	$144.50
VT911	$164.50
VT-Kaze	$189.50
MZ-F	$56.95
MZ-H Solid	$58.95
MZ-H Dual	$64.95

SIMPSON

*Bandit	$169.50
*Voyager	$139.50
*Horizon	$129.50
Enforcer	$89.50
JB	$89.50
*Tri-Color	add $20.00

Arai

F-1	$142.50
*Astro Super Vent Snell '85	$114.95
Ultra Light	$220.95
Signature Snell '85	$130.95
*Classic Open Snell '85	$69.00
MXV	$99.00
*Vintage Series	add $10.00

SHOEI

Z100 Vented Snell '85	$187.50
Z100 Vented Tri-Color	$197.50
RF105 Vented	$104.50
RF105 Vented Tri-Color	$143.50
GX-1	$172.50
RV Vogue	$178.50

NOLAN

N24	$49.95
N33	from $78.95
N41 Solid	$74.95
N41 Dual	$94.95
N42	$149.95

KiWi

K10	$84.95
K14	$49.95
K16	$194.95
CP4	$124.95

DR300 Silver, USA Made	$66.50
DR305 Silver, USA Made	$63.50
DR295 Black USA Made	$63.50
DR285 Black USA Made	$59.50
DR275 Go USA Made	$44.50
DR112 Blue or Yellow, USA	$29.50
DR121 Yellow or Orange, USA	$24.50
*Boots	$5.00
*Hoods	$4.00
*Mitts	$4.00
*Specify suit number and color	
TOTES BOOTS slip on	$12.95

TOUR MASTER

1 pc. Rainsuit	$53.95
2 pc. Rainsuit	$62.95
Summer Gloves	$20.95
Road Race 2 Gloves	$31.95
Road Race 2 Gloves Tri	$36.95
Fingerless Glovs	$18.95

WIDDER

Lectric Vest On/Off	$74.95
Lectric Vest w/Thermo	$92.95
Lectric Chaps	$65.95
Lectric Gloves w/Vest	$67.95
Lectric Gloves used alone	$76.95

AUTHORIZED BATES DEALER

Fast Lane Boots	$119.95
Road Race Gloves	$34.50
Winter Gloves	$36.50
Lined Street Gloves	$25.50

BROOKS

505 Chaps	$99.95
973 Z Fashion	$139.95
984 Riders Only	$164.95
B-11 Boots	$74.95

HEIN GERICKE

Bomber	$144.95
V-Pilot	$194.95
Concord	$189.95
California	$149.95
Boot Cut Jeans	$158.95
Cadet	$95.95

DOW CANVAS

*Super G125 Dacron	$43.50
*Super G100 Dacron	$38.50
*Super G50 Dacron	$32.50
*Super G45 Dacron	$29.50
Protector PX125	$40.50
Protector PX100	$35.50
Protector PX50	$31.50
Protector PX45	$28.50
Fairing Cover X40	$29.50
*Canvas add	$6.00

Ga-Zoo-Bi

	E-Z Line	Mid-Range	Super
Basic	$28.50		$34.50
Half	$29.50		$36.50
Full	$30.50		$38.50

TRANSWESTERN
Elect. Gloves $44.95

DON'T BE FOOLED

Catalogs along with their printed prices are many times obsolete before you get them. We have the flexibility in this type of ad to offer you the lowest possible price each and every month. Why go to a catalog and then still have to call for a firm price. Our low printed prices are guaranteed until 8-31-86. The next time you read an ad stating "Find the best price in this magazine, then, call us, we'll beat any price.", ask yourself why they didn't bother to print their lowest price up front and save you the time and hassle.

Competition Accessories, Inc.

1944 U.S. 68 North, Xenia, Ohio 45385

NOTICE: For your's and our protection, we validate all charge card transactions thru "Tele-Card Security Systems".

TOLL FREE 1-800-543-3535

OHIO CALLERS DIAL TOLL FREE 1-800-252-3131

To order - check on availability - fit - price - our opinion and recommendations, etc. We now have 20 incoming lines.

FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE CALL 1-513-372-6621, 9-5 Mon.-Fri.

ATTENTION: Don't be fooled by Super Low Prices on similar products. All of our items are First Line, Name Brands - No Blems, Closeouts or Cheap Imitations. We advertise the make of our products; do others??

CYCLE SOUND
Std. Speaker Poly.....$76.95
Coaxial Speaker Poly.....$94.95
84/85 Interstate/ASP.....$104.95

KRYPTONITE
THE TOUGHEST LOCK ON THE STREET
Lock K4MC.....$34.50
Lock Carrier, K4MC Only.....$9.50
Lock K4FF.....$28.95
Lock K4XL.....$44.95

NEP SALES
Cruise Control..$7.49
530 Sprocket Chain Kit.....$82.00
630 Sprocket Chain Kit.....$94.00

DID Chain

630 V (O Ring).....$54.95
530HDL (O Ring).....$44.95

RK

*530SO O Ring Chain.....$44.95
*630SO O Ring Chain.....$54.95
*Gold.....add $25.00

ALLYN Air Seats.....$25.95
Cycle Foot.....$1.95

Barnett

Honda V45 Extra Plate Kit.....$64.95
Kawasaki 900 Extra Plate Kit...$69.95
Suzuki 750/850 Ex. Pl. Kit.....$72.95
XS1100 Extra Plate Kit.....$72.95
For Other Kits - CALL!

Wiseco

Honda Big Bore
750/836.....$209.00
1100/1123.....$239.00
Kawasaki Big Bore
650/720.....$209.00
900/1015.....$219.00
1100/1260.....$299.00
Suzuki Big Bore
750/816.....$219.00
1100/1168.....$229.00
Yamaha Big Bore
FJ600/652.....$209.00
FJ1100/1188.....$229.00
For Other Kits - CALL!

SOS
New Priority Lite Plus.....$47.95
Priority Lite.....$23.95
New Pulsar Modulator.....$59.95
4 Way Flasher.....$10.95
Turn Signal Beeper.....$6.95
Vanda Cruise.....$22.95
Vista Cruise.....$10.95
Super Vista.....$24.95

CARB STIX II....$22.50
PRO CARB STIX..$27.50
ANCRA Tie Downs.....$12.49

SEE OPPOSITE PAGE FOR HOURS

KERKER

4 into 1 Std.....$199.50
K2, K2S, KR.....$200.50
Interceptor Ninja.....$257.50
Jet Kits.....from $74.95
KX.....$262.50
Slip Ons.....$159.95

F1

F1 Standard.....$118.00
F1 Race.....Most Systems $178.00

Jardine

Slip on Mufflers.....$103.00
4 into 2 System.....$194.00
4 into 1 System.....$177.00
4 into 1 Black, New.....$119.00

SUPERTRAPP

Slip Ons.....$184.00
Racing System Black.....$216.00
Super Street.....$206.00
Superlight.....$254.00

VANCE HINES

Std. 4 into 1, blk.....$198.00
Superbike 4 into 1.....$216.00
Super Street.....$239.00
Chrome & Blk. Chrome Avail.-CALL!

YOSHIMURA

*Slip Ons.....$149.00
*Racer Replica or Super St....$209.00
Series 7 Black.....$169.00
Series 8 Black.....$189.00
Black Cannister.....add $10.00

SUPERFLOW

*2 into 1.....$84.95
$4 into 1.....$119.95
Gemini 4 into 1.....$134.95
*For Chrome.....add $20.00

DERALE

QA-1.....$69.50
Racing Cooler.....$135.50

TELEFIX

Lowers . $259.95-319.95
Brace.....$61.00
Weigl Adj. Bars..$64.95
Weigl Wh. Bal...$64.95
Weigl Mo.Boy...$79.95

FOX

Street Paws.....$17.95
Track Paws.....$27.95
Super Street Boots.....$79.95
Shox w/Springs.....$129.95
Twin-Clicker Shock.....$269-$289.00

RUSSELL

Single Disc. Frt.....$36.50
Dual Disc Frt. (3).....$54.50
Dual Disc Frt. (5).....$91.50
Rear Disc.....$22.50
Hydraulic Clutch.....$23.50
Interceptor Liquid.....$84.50
Dot 5 Brake Fluid.....$7.95

TARGA
KRAUSER
MAXON
NOLAN
DIAMOND
GREER
O'NEAL
AGV
KG
GSM
ATK
Panasonic
NOVO
KC HILITES
CHABE HARPER
TSUBAKI
DRAG SPECIALTIES
Ontario moto tech corporation
simons
SCOTT USA
ND

K&N

4 Filter Set.....$34.95
Superbike Bars, Blk.....$18.95
Interceptor Filter.....$19.95
Goldwing (GL1100) Filter.....$16.95
Goldwing (GL1200) Filter.....$20.95
Venture Filter.....$26.95
Jet Kits.....from $74.95

DIAL-A-JET

Kits from.....$54.95

DYNA III

Electronic Ignition.....$82.95
Dyna S. Ignition.....$72.95
Dyna Coils.....$66.95
RPM Limiter.....$48.95

PROGRESSIVE SUSPENSION

Magnumatic Shocks.....$219.50
Fork Springs.....$36.50
Mono Shock Rear Springs.....$49.50

KONI

Lifetime Warranty
76 Series w/Spring.....$117.50
7610 Series w/Spring.....$147.50

INTERPART

Mulholland Airshocks.....$149.95
Performance Shocks.....$98.95
STD Brake Pads.....$12.95
Dual Friction Brake Pads.....$15.95

FERODO

Pads 2453 Material.....$17.66

FRAM

Oil Filters.....$4.49
Honda V-spin on filters.....$5.99
Harley Davidson filters.....$5.99
Quantity Discount Available

WOLF

Wolf Trap.....$18.95
Wolf Pak.....$31.95
Pro Pak.....$31.95
Canteen.....$14.95

stebel

Electric Horns.....$24.50
Air Horns.....$29.00

MARZOCCHI

Gas Shocks.....$109.00
Symbol Shocks.....$139.00

LOCKHART
COMPETITION SERIES

Apple Warmers.....$14.95
500 Oil Coolers.....$89.95
600 Oil Coolers.....$129.95
700 Oil Coolers.....$116.95
Competition Cooler.....$159.95
Lowers.....$184.95 to $269.95
Fast Glass Fairing..$369.95 & $549.95
Windscreens.....$41.95
Glasmask Bras.....$26.95
Oil Pressure Gauges.....$44.95
Tarozzi Rearsets.....$134.95
Watari Rearsets.....$154.95
Super Street Bars.....$54.95
Steering Damper.....$72.95
Shark Skin Gloves.....$34.95
Solot Seats.....$134.95 & $139.95
Tank Top.....$36.95
Glasmask Bra.....$28.95
Glasmask Upper.....$34.95
Glasmask Lower.....$34.95
Trick-its.....$27.95 & $41.95

TARGA

Gunfighter Seat.....$139.95
Sport Cowlings.....from $169.95
Formula Cowlings.....from $174.95
Air Foils.....$18.95
Fender Tips.....$26.95
Headlight Cover.....from $19.95
Windscreens.....$44.95

VentureLine

Front Bumper Trim Assembly...$79.95
Front Wh Rotor Cvr Assembly..$82.95
Front Wh Brake Cal. Cvr. Assy..$81.95
Chrome Plated Alum. Grill Assy.$119.95
Chrome Plated Air Dam Assy...$89.95
Chrome Plated Accent Panel Set$61.95
Rider Floorboard Set.....$279.95
Passenger Floorboard Set.....$62.95
Deluxe Saddlebag Trim Rail...$359.95
Chr. Plated Exhaust Extensions..$44.95
Deluxe Rear Mudflap.....$24.95
Tour Box Lug. Rack Assy.....$61.95
Tour Box Trim Rail Assy.....$119.95
Custom Grips.....$24.95
Custom Driving Lights.....$169.95
Wiring Kit.....$7.95
License Plate Frame.....$17.95
Side Panel Heat Shield.....$34.95
Saddlebag Trim Rail Light Set..$59.95
Rider Backrest-Brown.....$139.95
Rider Backrest-Black.....$139.95
Tail Windshield.....$69.95
Cigarette Lighter.....$16.95
Nylon Saddlebag Liner.....$19.95
Nylon Trunk Liner.....$21.95
Sofpack Duffle Bag.....$34.95
Intercom Headsets-Open Face.$101.95
Intercom Headsets-Full Face...$84.95
Headset Extension Leads.....$9.95
Yamaha Motorcycle Alarm.....$64.95
Remote Paging System.....$139.95
Tape-on Antenna.....$8.95
Venture Motorcycle Cover.....$61.95
Venture Radio Package.....$695.95
Venture Cassette Deck.....$259.95

"Our 26th Year in the Motorcycle Business"

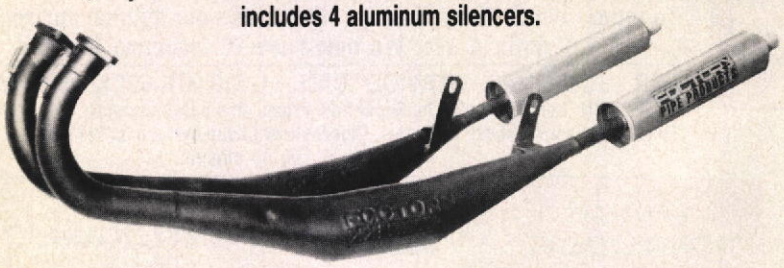
If you think our accessory prices are super, try our motorcycle prices on Yamaha and BMW - CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-543-3535

We finally have our new warehouse, shipping department, and super computer in full operation. This will enable us to have an even more complete inventory, ship even faster, have all order status info at our fingertips and customer service will be able to help you much faster. Our goal is to make mail-order buying the fastest, easiest, suriest, most-satisfying and by far the most economical way of purchasing your motorcycle needs. We wish to thank our many thousands of repeat customers who hung in there with us until we were on this system and operating smoothly.

FACTORY
PIPE PRODUCTS

RZ 350 PIPES

13 h.p. increase @ 10,500 RPM, 20 lbs. lighter than stock, wide power band, only 4 dba louder than stock. Retains side & center stand. $199.00, includes 4 aluminum silencers.



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A little digging revealed that while the 550-pound Scooter didn't fall into the category of motorcycle, neither was it precisely a car. The fact that it's got two wheels in front with McPherson-strut suspension and a single wheel in back on a BMW-style single-side swingarm puts the Scooter into a highly specialized pigeonhole. The official word from Wolfsburg on the liquid-cooled, gull-wing contrivance is that it's a "motorcycle with sportscar comfort and convenience."

• The July issue also contained a report on another model that's equally hard to position: Suzuki's new Gag. The 50cc, street-legal machine includes clip-ons and a full, race-type fairing. A second look at this small Gag revealed that not only is it one of the hottest-selling new models in Japan (currently, the Gag is limited to domestic sale only), it's also generated an overnight aftermarket business. Reportedly, hotrod parts and accessories—designed to take the stock 5-horsepower, 140-pound bike well beyond its claimed 37-mph top speed—are selling almost as fast as the bike.

APART FROM THE CROWD

• These days, microchips are as integral to motorcycles as the wheels are. But they're not just the thinking part of sophisticated fuel-injection systems or of complex trip computers. And it isn't just that computers are used to perform countless functions at virtually each stage of a motorcycle's design. Now they're being used to handle every aspect of hot-rodding an engine, except the actual spinning of wrenches. A British computer firm, Data Tune Systems, reportedly is gearing up to market a new program designed to provide answers on how to elevate particular streetbike motors to different states of tune. Our men Over There report the program will provide everything from port dimensions to jetting changes—and every detail in between. When the program is ready, we're told, all you'll have to do is punch up the make and model of motorcycle you want to supertune, polish up your tools and wait for the printout. Sort of like having HAL as your personal tuner.

• On a much more down-to-earth note, you'll be pleased to hear that the two-wheel vehicle standing apart from the crowd outside of France's Orly Airport is a licensed Parisian taxi. Scooter Express, recently certified as the only two-wheel taxi service ever allowed in Paris, currently is using a fleet of four faired Vespa 125s to haul passengers and whatever luggage can be stuffed into or on the scooters' tail trunks. Four scooters in the sea of Paris traffic is barely a drop in the ocean, but you can count on there being more of the metercycles in the near future. After having passed an initial six-month tryout period with no accidents, Scooter Express reportedly is ready for major expansion. As they say *en français, vive la difference.* •

PRODUCT EVALUATION:

F1 Slip-Ons

The beauty is that it's skin deep.

• Style is style, whether you're talking about the way a motorcycle looks or the way it sounds. Today, the fresh-from-the-track look undoubtedly is *in*, and few aftermarket pieces add to that image more effectively than a snarling, racing-derived exhaust system. Form and function don't always go hand in hand, though, and many riders don't want to replace the entire exhaust system—or put up with the attention-getting yowl some pipes emit—to get that paddock-inspired look. For those riders, F1 offers an alternative: Slip-On mufflers, which are intended to only slightly alter a bike's exhaust note without affecting the engine's powerband.

True to their name, the Slip-On mufflers install easily: Our VF500F Interceptor needed no more than 15 minutes to complete the swap. We saved a fair amount of time by having a spare set of asbestos pipe gaskets on hand, because the stock items don't always come out of the original pipes intact.

With the Slip-Ons bolted up, the VF500's vee-four gave off a mild yet throaty rumble. It's so mild, in fact, that above 50 mph you can't hear it over wind noise, even with the motor wound to redline. Overall, the sound seems to be an ideal compromise; it's pleasing without being the least bit annoying. What's more, the F1s left the engine's performance intact—there's no perceptible change in the amount or spread of power, and the Interceptor's carburetion remained spot-on.

The Slip-Ons do offer a more-functional advantage over a stock system, though: At 7 pounds per pair, the F1 mufflers slice a total of 8 pounds from the Interceptor's weight. And while this difference won't transform a motorcycle overnight—we couldn't detect any difference on the VF—it's a respectable weight savings for a bolt-on part. Not only are the F1s lighter than the stock parts, they're less expensive, too. At $129.95 per pair, the Slip-Ons are $40 cheaper than the Honda replacements; for some bikes, a pair of F1s cost about as much as a single stock muffler. And so the F1s seem to win on all fronts: Not only are they a less expensive way to replace a crash-damaged muffler, but they can add a measure of personality to the look and exhaust note while saving weight to boot. Just think of it as getting extra style without the sting.

—Marc Cook

F1 Slip-On Mufflers
Distributor: F1, 4760 E. Bryson St., Anaheim, California 92807
Suggested retail prices: from $70 to $179.95

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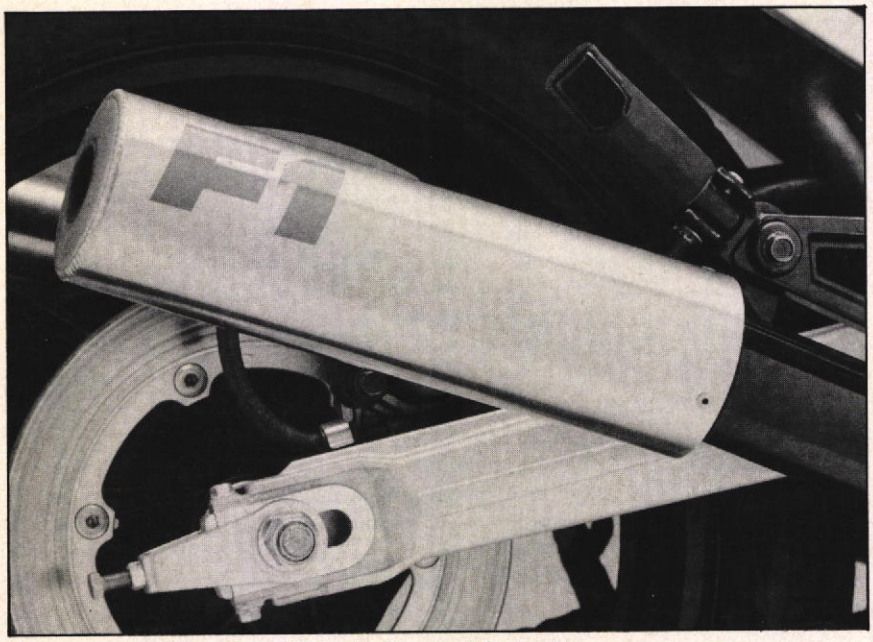

Slip-Ons give the look of Superbike's aluminum-canister header

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ROAD RACING:

La Carrera Classic

License? We don't need no stinking license.

BY TERRY CORNELIUS

This is Baja, the Valhalla of off-road racing, but here in the parking lot of the Bahia Hotel sits a Honda XL350 curiously shod in a set of roadrace tires. Off to one side, two reasonably dirt-ready Kawasaki KLR600s share the same pavement with a sleek new 750 Ducati Montjuich and a 1947 Manx Norton. And in the midst of it all, in the middle of the lot, sits the weird Harold of motorcycling, a rotary-engine Suzuki RE5. Don't ask me to explain it, because I can't.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 JONATHAN EXLEY

This is the new La Carrera, a 140-mile car and motorcycle roadrace across the width of Baja, featuring the oddest mix of racers since the Cannonball Run—and (here you can drop to your knees in prayer) the whole thing's completely legal.

The race vaguely commemorates La Carrera Panamericana, a world-class roadrace that ran the length of Mexico in the early '50s. In 1954, the year the Pan-American was abolished, Italian Umberto Maglioli set a new course record, pushing his Ferrari for an average of 108 mph over the 1908-mile course. As a way of paying homage to the race's antiquity, the organizers encourage vintage as well as newer motorcycles to enter. And perhaps acknowledging the early race's bloody reputation, all bikes are limited to one- or two-cylinder four-stroke engines in an effort to hold down the speeds.

It's about noon when Jeff Smith and I arrive in the Bahia parking lot in Smith's wheelchair-equipped BMW with its zeppelin look-alike sidecar. Between the frame, engine and sidehack, the rig spans two decades of German design, and it isn't lost on me that the part I'm to ride in was built a scant year after Maglioli's record win. The nonstandard race accessories, including the hand shifter and the wheelchair, can be traced directly to a 1981 get-off that left Smith paralyzed from the waist down, but certainly no more humble, as his friends will attest.

As I gaze around the hotel parking lot at the weird collection of machinery, it strikes me this might be the only place in the world where a hand-controlled BMW bolted to a miniature Goodyear blimp would barely rate a second glance.

Smith and I got a glimpse of what to expect the previous evening. It was just before midnight in front of the Estero Beach Hotel, where the car racers were staying before the start of La Carrera, when a yellow Lincoln pulled up. The occupants had driven through the night to reach Ensenada in time for the start. The crossed flags of Mexico and the U.S. were painted crudely on the front of the hood. It looked just like the car pictured in a 1953 issue of Life magazine in a report on the Pan-American race titled "Racers challenge death in Mexico." The race referred to in that article was the inspiration for tomorrow's La Carrera, but fortunately the name would be as close as the resemblance got.

At the Estero Beach Hotel, a cab arrives to take us back to the Bahia. Eight of us pile in while the driver gabs with the hotel guard in the glare of our headlights, the engine idling. Cliff Carr, a former British roadracer and factory Kawasaki rider, is sitting patiently in the front seat when he decides it's time to go. Carr, who's also one of the La Carrera promoters, flips the transmission into drive; the driver manages to leap to the side just in time to hop through the open door and off we go toward Ensenada. On the way, our driver does an admirable job of dicing with a 1966 Chevy two-door that's weaving across two lanes of traffic.

The next morning, Carr's co-conspirator Loyal Truesdale, who rode the first resurrected La Carrera in October 1985, greets us in front of the hotel and reports that everything is going according to plan, particularly after Mrs. de la Madrid called from the presidential palace in Mexico City to whip up a little enthusiasm among the local ward bosses. It seems they were less than thrilled about having yet another race in their backyard, not to mention one with the audacity to close a public highway.

"The phones started ringing from all over Baja," Truesdale notes, referring to the sudden surge of aid after the first lady's phone call.

He also informs us of a tech inspection at 2 p.m. Smith and I look at the duffel bag strapped across the front of our sidecar, tug on the bungee cords securing his wheelchair to the frame, and try to imagine what the AFM might have to say about this.

We needn't have bothered. La Carrera is, shall we say, informal, and from what Smith and I can tell, tech consists of parking the BMW at the convention center three blocks away, where anyone who walks by can inspect it and the 90 or so other bikes and cars assembled there.

This also is a part of La Carrera, standing Izod to elbows with millionaire auto buffs who probably spend more on their cocoa mats than you and I will on our mounts, and chatting with some of the greats of motorcycling, like Dick Mann and Gary Nixon. "More than a race, it's a happening," touted one of the race fliers, and that's pretty close to the truth.

The rules in La Carrera are simple—turn the throttle on and hold it until you reach the mandatory pit stop at Valle de Trinadad, about 75 miles into the race. Gas up and hold the throttle again until you reach a point several miles north of San Felipe.

The first 30 miles of the course—Public Highway 3 linking Ensendada with San Felipe—consists of tight turns that open up to gradual sweepers as you near the halfway point. The road then flattens out into a plain before you hit more small mountains, then finishes off with a descent to the coastal desert and a 30-mile straight into San Felipe.

On race morning, the field lines up on Boulevard Costero, a block away from the Bahia, while Mexicans line both sides of the street to get a view of the start. The bikes are flagged off at one-minute intervals, dashing through city streets closed off with varying degrees of success by the local police. Former AMA heavyweight Mark Brelsford delights the crowd with a wheelie that lasts until he disappears in the distance. Even Smith, who as a condition of his being here promised his wife he would ride like a maiden aunt, can't help nudging the throttle on the torquey BMW so that each time he shifts, the bike jerks against the drag of the outboard wheel.

Even in the world of international racing, the fans must be accommodated; once we're out of the city, the racers leisurely regroup for the real start, at a lonely spot on the highway where hardly anyone gathers to watch. A half hour later, the bikes are flagged away two at a time at one-minute intervals. The cars follow an hour later.

La Carrera is made for Cagiva/Ducatis. Steve Anderson pilots his Ducati 750 Montjuich to the fastest time—one hour and 17 minutes—which translates to an average speed of 109 mph. Ducati rider Rick Mitchel comes in second with an average of 106 mph. Perhaps the most impressive performance, however, is turned in by former Isle of Man winner Dave Roper, who rides his 1962 Matchless G50 to third overall, a little more than 3 minutes behind Anderson. Fred Eiker, on a 1974 Norton 750, finishes fourth overall.

Mandatory pit stop, designed to keep the speeds down

But Anderson's winning Ducati still turned 109 mph.

What the dual-purpose class lacked in speed, it made up for in talent with Mexican roadrace champion Jesus Rodrigues finishing first on George Huebner's borrowed 650 Cagiva Elefant, followed by Brelsford and Nixon on Kawasaki KLRs.

Smith's BMW handles surprisingly well, and despite the load on the engine, he claims a top speed of more than 90 mph for the first part of the race. Later, driveline problems on the straightaway into San Felipe force him to back off. But this is La Carrera, and typical of the race, Smith and I have the distinction of winning the sidecar class (never mind that we were the *only* sidecar) while coming in dead last overall. We ride home with a 2 ½-foot tall trophy strapped to the front of the hack.

The day after La Carrera, Eduardo Leon Camargo is fretting about the future of his race. He's wondering whether, perhaps, the speeds are still too high, whether the motorcycle entries should be limited to single cylinders. He has already made up his mind to cut out the endless open-throttle straightaway that leads from the El Chinero turnoff to San Felipe. He worries about being able to hire the scores of police officers necessary to keep traffic off the road, to avoid the kind of horrible accident that can end a race forever.

So, he is asked, will there be another La Carrera?

"Yes, I think so," says Leon. "If they don't put me in jail for this one."

They probably won't. After all, this is Baja. If it were the United States, they'd probably make a movie out of it. •

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 MIKE PONS

Cornelius and Smith, on their way to a last-place finish

Keeping a hammerlock on the sidehack class.

LA CARRERA CLASSIC:

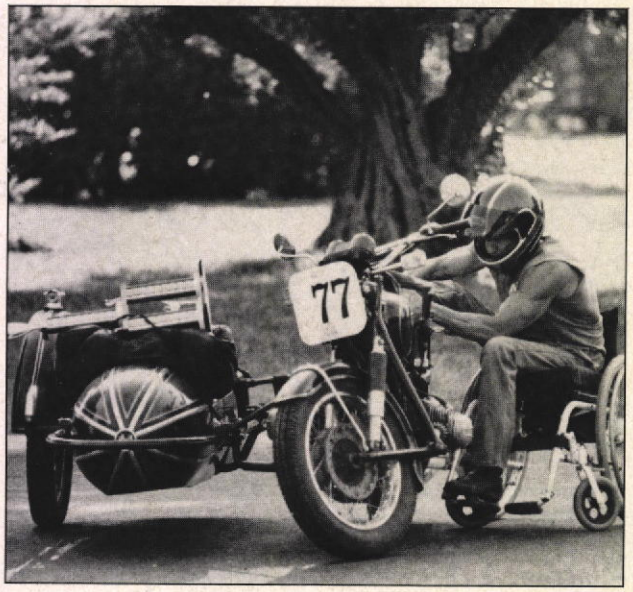
The Class Menagerie

The race crosses Baja, but that's only half the contest.

BY JEFF SMITH

I believe it was Henry Kissinger who said power is the ultimate aphrodisiac. That observation was back in the days when Hank the K was potent.

A quick look at Mrs. K compared, say, to the tousled nymphet in clamdiggers and sequined sneakers on the arm of car racer Johnny Von Neumann during tech inspection for La Carrera Classic, makes Henry appear pretty dumb. I am recently returned from Baja California, scene of this motorcycle-and-vintage-racecar Chinese fire drill, where Eternal Truths were reaffirmed for everyone with eyes to see.



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Candy may be dandy, liquor quicker, and power in flower, but money's the honey that draws the bees. It's a simple fact of life, a form of natural selection. I figure if a 60-ish gent wants to race a Ferrari 308 GTS, bring along a 105-grand new Testarossa for a pit bike, and keep an equally expensive 20-ish girl as co-pilot, more power to him. He'll need all he can muster.

It was the opportunity to observe these primitive rituals and other anthropological phenomena that made La Carrera Classic as much of a must-see as the race itself. Which—the race, that is—was an event of classic tradition, great hilarity, and as high a level of safety as plausible, given the setting. Nobody's dried-up milk cow got goosed into the path of a speeding *bolide* in search of a multimillion peso settlement.

When word reached me that a bunch of fossils from bike and motorcar racing were staging a race from coast to coast across Baja, with the assistance of the Mexican government, bringing vintage-car racers in tweeds and raw silks, single- and twin-cylinder-motorcycle racers in ancient black leathers, and an Exhibition Class of cars that promised the Beverly Hills nouveau riche drug, movie and rock 'n' roll money in Don Johnson costumes and Countaches, I thought, "This is a class war I must witness firsthand."

The only way to do it right was to cover the event from party time in Ensenada, through full-tilt boogie across Baja, to beer:30 at the finish line in San Felipe. The only way outside of a chartered chopper to do that was to enter my sidehack in the race, and the only way to do that, without hearing from my wife's lawyer or hired gun, was to promise to finish last.

Which I did. Somehow I was even listed behind a DNF. But I also was first (and only) in the sidecar class, so I had to bungee a 2 ½-foot trophy to the hack for the 450-mile haul home.

What price glory?

But I digress. Our arrival in Ensenada was a bit disappointing. We were housed at a downtown hotel more or less comparable to a YMCA, while the car crowd was billeted south of town at the cushiest digs on the Pacific side of Baja. I'd been wondering how the class conflict between mega-buck vintage-car racers and shoestring floggers of old Ducati singles would be resolved. The answer was perfect in its simplicity: segregation.

This is Mexico, and the Emancipation Proclamation does not apply.

To be fair, the car folks booked their own rooms and paid twice the price. One gets what one pays for, and we bikers paid for and got clean sheets, no cucarachas, a hell of a swell race, and more fun than the law allows north of the border.

At tech inspection, on neutral ground at the local convention center, bike types and car types alike got to ogle one another's toys—metal and flesh—and begin the slow process of mutual acceptance.

These things don't happen overnight. Legends of motorcycling like Dick Mann, Gary Nixon and Mark Brelsford meandered through the parking lot unnoticed and unappreciated by the car types. Obversely, it was easy for us bikers to tell the high-roller car guys. You see a man in a $5000 Rolex next to a $250,000 '32 Alfa grand prix car and

a $500,000 female, and you intuit he is a Major Personage.

We all found out precisely who at the racers' meeting at which several former Grand National bike champs and racers from the first Carrera Panamericana were introduced. And at which the car folk graciously invited the bike folk to a no-host buffet at their flat.

We split for an S, S and S at the hotel and a lube-job at Hussong's legendary cantina, but by the time most of us caught cabs out to the buffet, it was picked clean as a Ferrari valve cover. The hotel kitchen staff, judging by the leather, Levi's and drip-dry on the late arrivals, that this was not the same caliber of human as the registered guests in the natural fibres, tried to refuse us service. Uh uh, Jose. Get out in that kitchen and rattle them pots and pans.

They did—and rewarded our determination with steaks cut from the fighting bulls they named the Lamborghini Miura after, and defrosted lobster-matter which we wound up feeding to the stray cats in the parking lot. Our table for four bought $85 worth of cat chow.

Race day dawned bright and clear, as we scribes so love to say—brighter and clearer than the racers after a night of margaritas and bad food. But thanks to inevitable delays, everyone was stone sober and race-prepped by the time they began launching us down the 143 miles to San Felipe.

Pity the car types didn't get to see Mark Brelsford's half-mile wheelie off the line. Pity we didn't get to see Porsche RSRs light up their art-gums. For reasons of sanity and safety, they flagged the bikes off first at one-minute intervals and waited an hour before turning the cars loose. The race itself had few DNFs and fewer casualties, the worst of whom was the lady passenger in a Porsche that blew a tire and launched itself into the lunarscape. She and various volunteers spent the rest of the weekend picking cactus out of her hide. I offered to help, but the good parts were already spoken for.

That evening's post-race feeding frenzy confirmed a couple of earlier impressions: That the automobilistis had the hammer on the bikes, digs-wise; but that a racer is a racer, prince or pauper, and can share a convivial evening of bonhomie and outright lies.

Still, one of the ladies in raw silk on the arm of a car racer was overheard to remark of some black T-shirted motorcyclists, "They don't seem to fit in, don't you know."

No, I don't.

I thought the whole thing was good as a circus, evoking memories of racing when it was done for the sheer adrenaline of it. In places where life was held somewhat more cheaply. In times before nuisance litigation.

This business is of major concern to the organizers of La Carrera: Eduardo Leon in Mexico, and Loyal Truesdale, Cliff Carr and Cliff Jones in the U.S. Fault could be found with this year's race, and was, on matters of timing and scorekeeping, mainly.

Nonetheless over breakfast the morning after, Eduardo was concerned about making the next race even safer. He thought of perhaps limiting the bikes to singles. I'd hate to see that. By way of further constructive criticism, the Vintage Auto Racing Association may be better equipped and experienced at timing and scoring, and might handle those chores for cars and bikes next time out. Also the mandatory 10-minute midpoint pit stop for the cars is a good idea in terms of safety. It equalizes the emphasis on pilot skills, takes the risk out of refueling, gives time to spot equipment failures-in-the-making, and offers a guy a chance to take a leak. I'm for that one.

It would be nice too, to bring the bikes and cars closer together on a social, if not a competitive level—if only to make better friends of us all, and offer greater opportunities to chuckle at each other's quirks. I've got the next Carrera penciled on my calendar already.

Dick Mann offered to ride the hack with me next time. So did the girl with the world's best tan, from Dyno Cycles in Santa Barbara. So did one of the distaff companions of the high-roller car owners. What is this thing about sidecars?

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High-rollers, Tecate balloons and historic Alfas

And enough hot air to get it all off the ground.

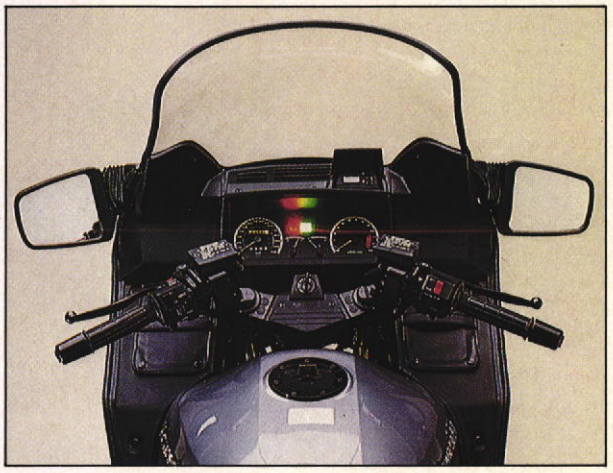
What is this thing about La Carrera Classic? Well it's real roadracing with real roadracers without the real stomach cramps of having corporate Japan on your back and a race-face on for 24 hours before the flag drops. It's a chance to rub elbows, swap stories and actually race with Bugsy Mann, Gary Nixon, Dave Roper, "Iron Butt" Egloff, Mark Brelsford, and Mexican roadrace champ, Jesus Rodriguez. It just might be the start of something big, but not too big, and legendary—like the Cannonball Run—only legal. •

Kawasaki Concours

Scratch and spiff.

BY JERRY SMITH

From the beginning, the basics of sport-touring have consisted of two main elements—first, a motorcycle with outstanding speed, brakes and handling, and second, some kind of luggage to give that bike the ability to carry enough gear for several days on the road. These qualifications are still open to individual interpretation, though, and sometimes result in unacceptable compromises in either backroad performance or touring capability. So the search for the ultimate sport-touring package goes on.



But the end of that search might be close at hand, thanks to Kawasaki's new Concours, a bike that combines the backroad agility of a sportbike with the long-haul convenience of a touring bike. Although the entire sport-touring concept involves some compromise, Kawasaki is betting—and betting heavily—that its interpretation of sport-touring is in close harmony with that of sport-touring riders. And if the Concours is any indication, Kawasaki is backing a winner.

To fully appreciate the Concours, you have to understand the way Kawasaki interprets sport-touring. That interpretation evolved from the growing number of sportbike riders who strap soft luggage to their bikes and head for the sunset three or four days hence. But Kawasaki wanted its first sport-touring bike to be more than just a sportbike with soft luggage. Instead, the objective was to build, in the words of a Kawasaki spokesman, "a sportbike with all the touring amenities, including a good fairing and hard saddlebags—in other words, a bike suitable for long-range sport riding."

From its inception, the Concours' first priority was sporting performance. So to make certain of the bike's credentials in that environment, Kawasaki engineers gave the Concours the heart of a sportbike, in this case the 1000R Ninja. But the Concours' 633-pound weight (69 pounds heavier than the 1000R) and its desired load capacity dictated a wider spread of power than that of the 1000R, with more emphasis on low end and midrange than is the case in the Ninja's top-end-weighted powerband. So during its journey from the Ninja to the Concours, the 1000R's engine underwent a number of changes, similar to those employed to broaden the 900 Ninja engine's powerband for use in the 900 Eliminator. To begin with, the Concours uses 32mm carbs instead of the 1000R's 36mm units, and has a smaller airbox, too. In addition, the sport-tourer's camshafts provide less duration than the sportbike's (275 degrees vs. 290 degrees) and less lift (8.4mm vs. 9mm). Kawasaki claims these changes enable the Concours to put out 12 percent more horsepower and torque from 3000 to 7000 rpm than the 1000R, reaching a claimed peak of 108 horsepower at 9500 rpm, compared to the Ninja's claimed 123.

Aside from its shaft-drive components, in most other respects—including a 78mm bore and 58mm stroke, a 10.2:1 compression ratio, and intake and exhaust valve diameters of 29mm and 24.7mm, respectively—the Concours' liquid-cooled, counterbalanced four-cylinder engine is virtually the same as the 1000R's. Also carried over from the 1000R is an arm-stretching torrent of power in the upper reaches of the rev range, which, in concert with its enhanced midrange, not only makes the Concours the fastest bike with saddlebags from corner to corner, but one of the hardest charging coming out of corners, too.

But a hell-for-strong sportbike engine alone doesn't guarantee superb sport-touring prowess. The Concours' engine gets plenty of help during backroad maneuvers from its chassis, which only encourages the bike's appetite for apexes. As in the 1000R, the Concours' engine acts as a stressed member, eliminating the frame's front downtubes. Compared to a conventional double-downtube frame, the Concours design provides increased ground clearance, lighter frame weight and a lower center of grav-

Continued

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 DAVID DEWHURST

KAWASAKI CONCOURS

ity. The Concours has a steering head angle of 28.5 degrees and 123mm of trail, compared to the Ninja's 28 degrees and 108mm of trail, and a wheelbase of 61.7 inches, 1.6 inches longer than the 1000R with its axle at its rearmost position. And while the Ninja has 16-inch wheels front and rear, the Concours has a 16-inch rear paired with an 18-inch front, both of which are shod with sticky, V-rated Dunlop radial tires.

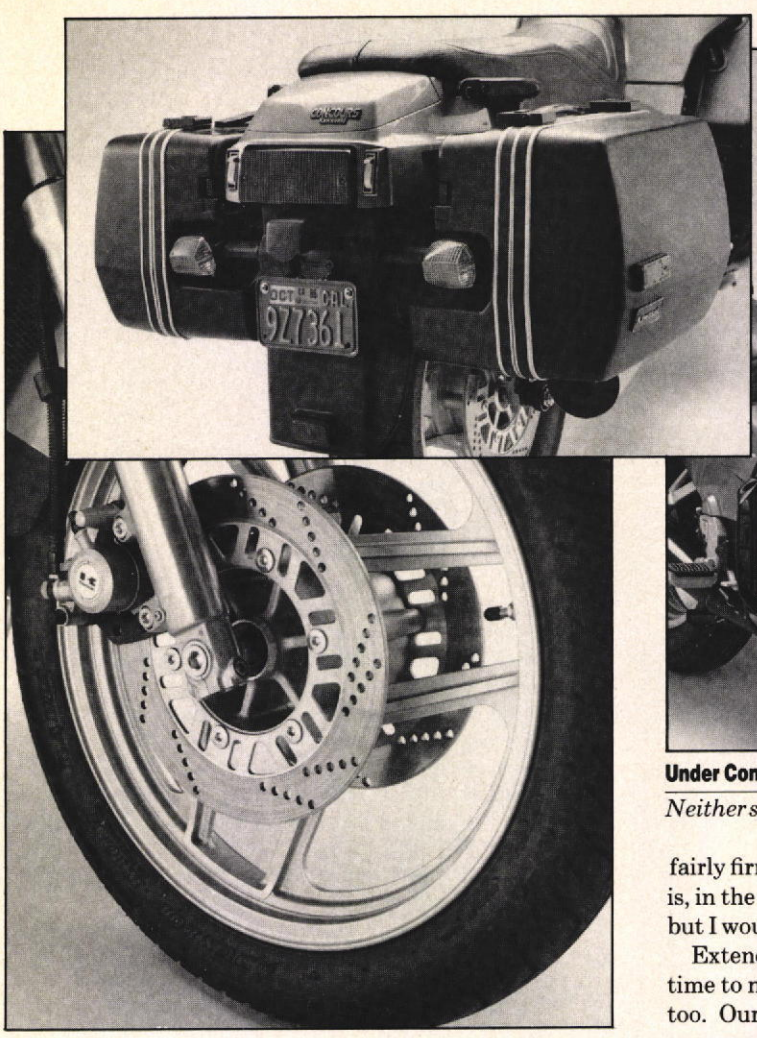
The Concours' Ninja ancestry shines through best on roads that would have some other bagger-bikes hiking up their skirts in dismay. It charges from corner to corner with a ferocity surpassed only by lighter, narrow-focus sportbikes, and when the road begins to twist like a snake-oil salesman's pitch, the number of touring bikes that can keep the Concours in sight can be counted on the fingers of one foot. In addition to sharing many engine components with the 1000R, the sport-tourer uses the same brake calipers as the Ninja, though with smaller discs up front (10.4 inches compared to the Ninja's 10.9-inchers) and a larger disc in the rear (10.9 compared to 10.2). And as is the case with the Ninja, the Concours' braking action is strong, predictable and fade-free even under the most extreme conditions—it almost seems as though you could load the Concours' saddlebags with lead ingots and still bring it to a tire-smoking halt time after time.

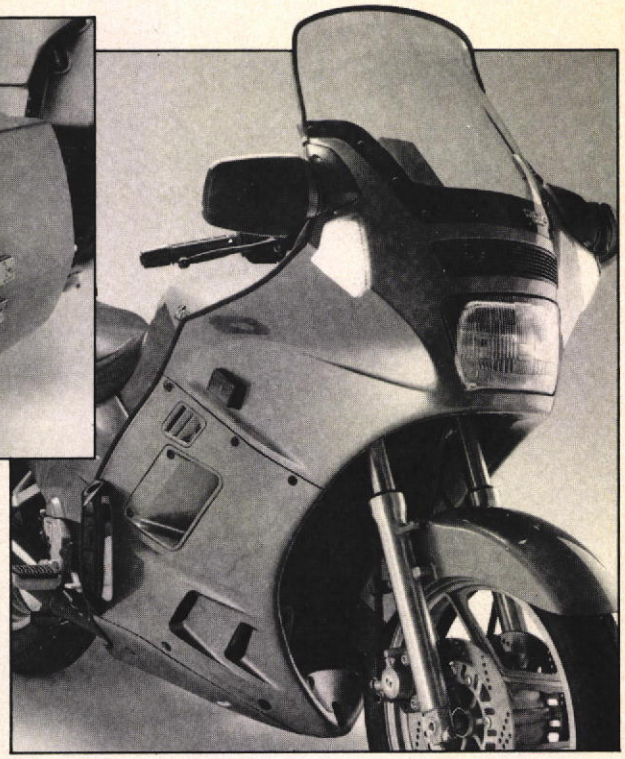
Another reason for the sport-tourer's backroad aplomb is that Kawasaki engineers went to great lengths to reduce the jacking inherent in shaft-drive bikes, in this case by making the Concours' swingarm the longest of any shaft-driven Kawasaki to date. If you're paying close attention, you can feel some movement at the rear of the bike when the throttle is snapped open or closed, but that movement is never severe enough to ruffle the Concours' feathers, even during spirited dashes through the canyons.

Rear wheel motion is also well-controlled by the rising-rate Uni-Trak rear suspension, and its appearance on the Concours marks the first time Kawasaki has equipped a shaftie with this system. Otherwise, the bike's rear suspension is similar to that of the 900 Ninja, with the top of the shock solidly mounted and the bottom attached to the linkage. Compared to the 1000R's rear shock unit, the Concours' shock has a slightly higher initial spring rate, less compression damping, and less rebound damping in the No. 1 and 2 positions, and more in the No. 3 and 4.

Its range of adjustability means the Concours can handle nearly any road surface you're likely to encounter short of pea-gravel and whoop-de-doos. For solo riding with the bags empty or removed, Kawasaki recommends 7 psi in both the fork and shock, and the No. 2 (of four) rebound-damping setting for the rear shock. Around town or on the freeway, these settings endow the Concours with a ride that's firm but not harsh, comfortable but not plush. Add cargo or increase the pace, however, and both the front and rear need more air—for a 200-pound rider with luggage, for example, 10 psi in the fork and 20 psi in the shock—and the shock works better with the rebound damping set at No. 3 or 4. Set as such, even with each of its removable saddlebags in place and loaded to its 22-pound capacity, the Concours can maintain a surprisingly torrid pace through wild country.

While the Concours might just be the answer to your sporting dreams on the backroads, straight-line touring spotlights some of the bike's more glaring compromises. The full fairing affords good weather protection, for exam-





Under Concours' long-haul exterior lurks a pure sporting heart

Neither spacious saddlebags nor full fairing can slow its beat.

ple, with only the rider's feet exposed near the curving belly pan, but the wind buffeting behind the Concours' windscreen can be loud and annoying—many riders felt earplugs were a must on the Concours. Ducking down and looking through the windscreen to escape the buffeting rewards the rider with a badly distorted view of the road, however, and the Concours' short cast handlebars make it difficult to sit up high in non-turbulent air for long. In addition, those same handlebars, although higher than those on the 1000R, are still fairly low and narrow for a bike of the Concours' heft. Low-speed and parking lot maneuvers must be executed with care, and around-town or stop-and-go riding for an extended period with a passenger on board can be unusually tiring.

If taking a passenger along is part of your ideal sport-tour, choose a passenger who's good at packing light. The Concours' saddlebags look huge—in fact, the Concours is 3 inches wider at the bags than an Aspencade—but their inner halves abound with space-stealing protrusions to accommodate turn signals, mounting brackets and such. A solo rider might be able to carry enough gear for a week on the road, but two people would be hard pressed to pack even the barest necessities without adding the optional tankbag or duffle. In addition, the buffeting that plagues the rider harries the passenger to some extent, too. Add the bike's fairly firm seat and the lack of a backrest, and the Concours is, in the words of one passenger, "all right for a day or two, but I wouldn't want to spend a week on it."

Extended tours of duty on the Concours give you ample time to notice the spotty fit and finish of the bike's fairing, too. Our test bike showed light through gaps between some panels, and the tacked-on wind deflectors meant to duct cool air onto the riders feet look, well, tacky. The saddlebags are similar to the hard bags offered by BMW and use similar latches and mounting hardware, but their fit and finish are not up to the standards of the German pieces. But as is the case with BMW bags, the tiny key used to lock them is awkward to use. And finally, although the Concours has two helmet locks, one on either side of the tail section, the saddlebags must be removed in order to use them, a provision that smacks of afterthought.

Kawasaki recognizes the Concours' two-up shortcomings, though, and suggests if you're looking for maximum comfort and convenience, you look at one of their two luxo-touring Voyagers. Floorboards, backrests and travel trunks were never intended to be part of the Concours equation. Instead, the Concours is a sport-touring bike with the emphasis on sport, meant for extended periods of high-speed, solo riding. And it's on these kinds of trips where the Concours excels, combining the clout of a sporting literbike with the comfort and convenience of a full fairing and hard saddlebags. For the rider who favors the sporting half of the sport-touring equation, the Concours is a landmark achievement for a first-year effort. It not only sets the standard for other sport-touring bikes sure to be offered by other Japanese manufacturers, but promises to become the definitive sport-tourer for years to come. •

Continued

KAWASAKI CONCOURS

Kawasaki Concours sport-touring

IMPORTER: Kawasaki Motors Corp., P.O. Box 25252, Santa Ana, California 92799

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $5899

ENGINE

Type ..... liquid-cooled four-stroke transverse vertical four
Valve arrangement ..... double overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder
Bore and stroke ..... 74.0mm x 58.0mm
Displacement 997.8cc
Compression ratio 10.2:1
Engine redline ..... 10,500 rpm
Carburetion ..... four 32mm Keihin semi-flat-slide constant-vacuum
Air filter ..... disposable paper element
Lubrication ..... wet sump
Starting system ..... electric only
Ignition ..... transistorized breakerless
Charging system ..... 12-volt; 350-watt alternator, voltage regulator/rectifier, 18-ampere-hour battery

DRIVETRAIN

Primary drive ..... straight-cut gears; 1.732:1 ratio
Clutch ..... wet, multi-plate
Transmission-to-driveshaft drive ..... spiral-bevel gears; 0.762:1 ratio
Driveshaft-to-rear-wheel drive ..... spiral-bevel gears; 3.556:1 ratio

Gear	Internal gear ratio	Overall gear ratio	MPH per 1000 RPM
I	3.071	14.412	5.19
II	2.056	9.645	7.76
III	1.591	7.465	10.03
IV	1.333	6.256	11.97
V	1.154	5.414	13.83
VI	0.966	4.531	16.52

SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

Front ..... Kayaba air-spring, 41mm stanchion tube diameter/4.8 in. (122mm)
Rear ..... single Kayaba air-spring shock, 4-position adjustable rebound damping/5.2 in. (132mm)

BRAKES

Front ..... dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 10.4-in. (265mm) effective disc diameter
Rear ..... single-action hydraulic caliper, 10.9-in. (278mm) effective disc diameter

TIRES

Front ..... 110/80V18 Dunlop K105F radial tubeless
Rear ..... 150/80V16 Dunlop K700G radial tubeless

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Weight ..... 633 lbs. (287.1kg)
Weight distribution ..... 46.0% front, 54.0% rear
Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) ..... 1107 lbs. (502.1kg)
Load capacity (with full fuel tank) ..... 425 lbs. (192.8kg)
Wheelbase ..... 61.7 in. (1566mm)
Seat height ..... 32.0 in. (813mm)
Handlebar width ..... 26.6 in. (675mm)
Footpeg height ..... 13.2 in. (335mm)
Ground clearance ..... 5.2 in. (133mm), at shock linkage
Steering head angle ..... 28.5 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail ..... 4.84 in. (123mm)
Frame ..... stressed-member, stamped and tubular mild-steel
Oil capacity ..... 4.4 qt. (4.0/)
Fuel tank ..... steel, 7.8 gal. (29.8/), including 1.7 gal. (6.4/) reserve
Instrumentation ..... speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, tachometer, coolant temperature gauge, fuel gauge, LCD digital clock

PERFORMANCE

Fuel consumption range ..... 32 to 58 mpg (14 to 25 km//)
Average fuel consumption ..... 42 mpg (18 km//)
Cruising range, maximum ..... 253 to 458 miles (407 to 737km)
Cruising range, reserve only ..... 54 to 99 miles (87 to 159km)
Speedometer error, 30 mph ind. ..... 28 mph actual
Speedometer error, 55 mph ind. ..... 51 mph actual
Best 1/4-mile acceleration ..... 12.497 sec., 106.13 mph (171 kph)
Top speed (observed) ..... 130 mph (209 kph)
Stopping distance from 30 mph ..... 33 ft. (10.1m)
Stopping distance from 60 mph ..... 125 ft. (38.1m)

WARRANTY: 24 months, unlimited mileage

AVAILABLE COLOR: Pearl Gentry Gray only

All weight and measurements are taken with machine unladen and fuel tank empty.

NITS:

- Rear brake pedal is too high, cannot be adjusted lower.
- Fairing pockets are extremely small, neither is locking.
- Toolkit is small and inadequate.
- Rear-wheel removal is complicated by large rear fender.

PICKS:

- Large, 7.8-gallon fuel tank provides excellent range.
- Dash-mounted clock is convenient.
- Fuel gauge is accurate and linear.
- Lock and chain included.

Ride Review

• At first, I was skeptical: One look at the Concours convinced me it would be better off touring than blitzing the backroads. But I was wrong. The Concours is the kind of bike I'd love to ride on California's Highway 1, because the bike, like that road, offers a little of both the sport and touring worlds. In addition, if you want to do some canyon carving, the Concours is more than willing and ready—as hard as I tried, I couldn't get the footpegs to kiss the asphalt.

The bike has more going for it than just handling, too: The 997cc Ninja-based engine is quick and responsive, and the brakes are typical Kawasaki—simply the best. I've only got one problem with the Concours—between the lack of wind, the comfortable riding position and the storage space, I keep forgetting those saddlebags are back there.

—Wes Cooley

• On paper, the Concours looks brilliant: It promises to be a swift, agile and comfortable sport-touring mount. And with the Concours, Kawasaki has paid strict attention to the bike's sporting role, which gives this Euro-styled secondary-road scorcher performance in keeping with its Ninja heritage.

That Ninja connection extends to the Concours' riding position, too, because the bars are scarcely 1 inch taller than the 1000R Ninja's, which places far too much weight on my arms and shoulders for me to be comfortable on the bike. I know that Kawasaki intends the Concours to be just one step away from a full-bore sportbike, but when a bike comes with touring as part of its title, I expect a great deal more long-distance comfort than the Concours provides, and its backroad performance can't make up for that.

—Marc Cook

• I've always thought James Bond would look simply smashing on a Ninja; the 1000, of course, in jet black. Kawasaki has finally realized, though, that any bike good enough for Agent 007 needs more storage space. After all, externally mounted machine guns and lasers would be far too obvious, and the fold-out wings need to be tucked in discreetly.

With the Concours, Kawasaki has built the ultimate Bond-mobile. There's plenty of room under the fairing for flush-mounted lasers, computers and the like; and with some simple rigging, a saddlebag filled with plastique could easily be jettisoned to fend off approaching foes. That probably won't be necessary, though, thanks to the Concours' uncanny match of power and handling. The other guys will *need* 1000 Ninjas just to keep up.

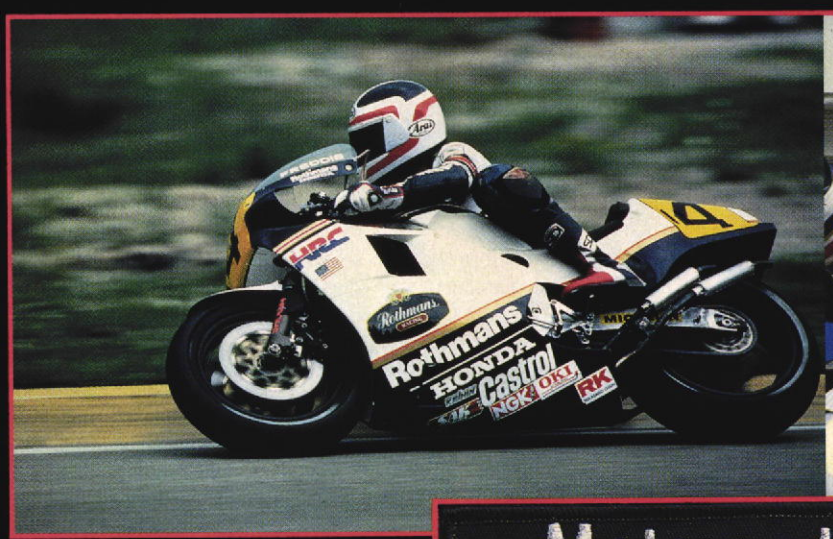
—Mike Gillies

CLASS ACT

FREDDIE SPENCER 500GP

FREDDIE SPENCER 250GP

WORLD CHAMPION



Motorcycle Chain RK Racing

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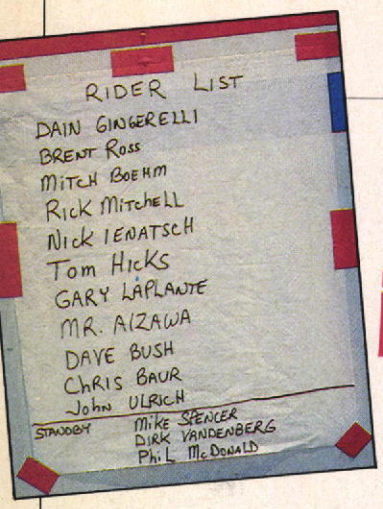
Send $10 check/money order to FTM & ASSOCIATES, 550 W. Regent St. #301 – Dept. FS, Inglewood, CA 90301 for your RK/Freddie Spencer racing T-shirt (state size), Patch and Decal Set, plus an RK Chain mail order listing. "O" Ring prices start at $40.00



TIME TRAVELERS:

3436 Miles in 24 Hours

We break the World record.

BY DAIN GINGERELLI

Five in the morning, and it's still dark. The VFR750's tachometer needle is buried in the red: 11,500 rpm. Calculated speed: 160 mph. I'm on my 18th and final lap of this session. By the time I'll return to the VFR's saddle for another 90-mile stint, the sun will be in full bloom, and I won't have to strain my eyes to see beyond the illuminated tunnel the single quartz-halogen headlight drills through the darkness, making night riding seem more like a deadly video game than a chase after the FIM 24-hour endurance record.

I approach the four-mile mark of Uniroyal's five mile elliptic test track, situated in the desolate Texas desert near the outskirts of Laredo. One mile to go, and I scan the horizon to my left, searching for the warming glow of lights from the pits. A patch of reflective tape on the racetrack warns me to slow down for the pit entry. After 35 minutes at better than 150 mph, it's hard to judge a safe entry speed without some marker as a reference.

The illuminated pit area comes into view, breaking the darkness like a scene from a sci-fi movie. The pit crew stands ready to refuel the bike while I vacate the seat for another rider. Everybody stands frozen like mannequins until the VFR and I come to a complete stop. Suddenly they swarm like drone bees around the queen. And I'm just another drone, passing the queen to another of her royal subjects.

While my ears continue to echo the wind noise that's pounded me for the past 35 minutes, and my hands and feet regain normal circulation—having sat tucked behind the Interceptor's bubble for what felt like eternity—I watch as Mike Spencer makes his scheduled pit stop a minute later aboard the VFR700. Spencer, who raced Superbikes for American Honda in 1981, appears shaken. "I just hit something big and black out there," he says, his voice charged with emotion.

Rider Christine Baur gets refreshment from jubilant Honda crew

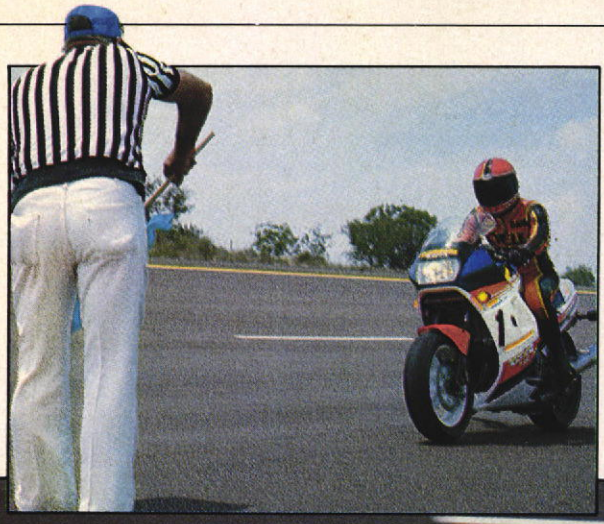
24 hours after the start, a well-deserved cool-off lap.

What all of us had feared finally happened. Spencer hit an animal (a badger, as we later learned) that wandered onto the track. Most desert animals spend their evening hours foraging for food, and the desert critters didn't understand that 14 riders were taking turns riding two Honda VFRs for 24 hours to break the speed record of 128.303 mph set last year by Suzuki and Cycle World magazine. Every rider dreaded scoring a four-legged bull's-eye that night.

The gravity of Spencer's story sinks in; only a minute before, I had passed the badger. It could have been me who scored the hit. As Spencer reports it, he saw the animal cross into his lane at about the first mile marker. There was nothing to do but hang onto the handgrips and wait. On impact, the 700 launched its front wheel into the air at better than 150 mph, setting down in the Number Three lane; Spencer began his odyssey in the inside lane, Number One. The bike and Spencer were OK, but the badger received more than a facelift in the deal.

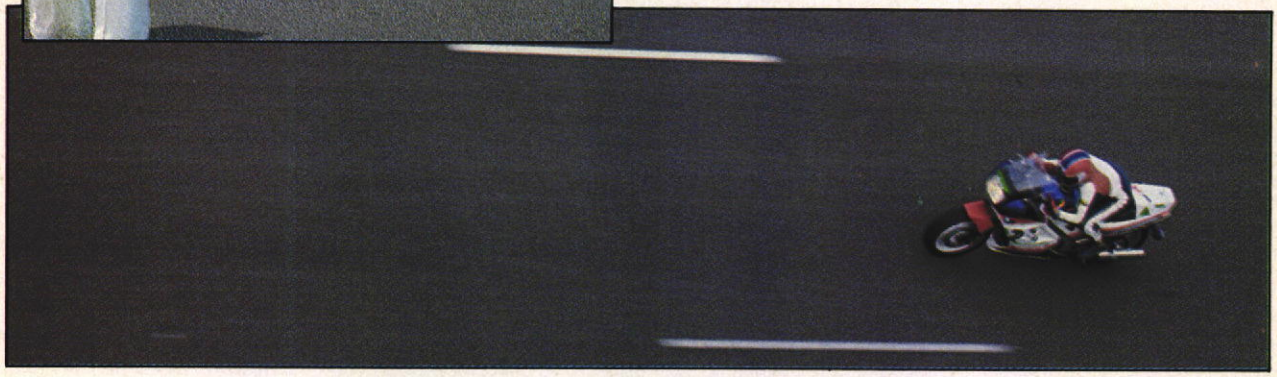
The record attempt was born last February at American Honda when staff engineer Tom Hicks along with Dirk Vandenberg, product evaluation manager, met with Udo Gietl of the race team, and put together the two-bike, 14-rider team. The list included several magazine editors, Honda employees (including Phil "Don'tcallmeMac" McDonald, who was a member of the Kawasaki 24-hour record team in 1977), and ex-racer and current stunt woman Christine Baur.

As for the facts: We started at 1 p.m., April 26. I was given the honor as first rider aboard the VFR750, the bike we figured would shatter the record. But within 12 laps, the rear Metzeler race slick began chunking pieces of rubber. Rick Mitchell (Motorcycle Industry Magazine) relieved me during the unscheduled tire change, but within a dozen laps the bike chunked another tire. The damaged tires were academic, though, because by 3:30 p.m., the 750



appears that a lap around the Uniroyal track would be simple: Gas it, and turn left. Not so.

In fact, to dip below a two minute time—for a 150-plus mph average—a rider had to do a little thinking, using gravity, track layout and prevailing wind to keep the speed up and tire wear down. The biggest secret for going fast was to stay tucked behind the bubble and not scrub off speed with the tires. That meant that the quickest way around the track wasn't the shortest. Instead of keeping to one lane, the fastest times resulted from letting the bike drift in and out of the lanes, giving a minimum of handlebar input as the wind and the track worked the bike across the tarmac. In the end, the two fastest riders were our smallest, the duo of



was resting along pit row, its vee-four engine laid low by a fluke piston failure.

Meanwhile, the VFR700 that Brent Ross (Rider) started kept droning on, heading for its short-lived 24-hour record of 138.907 mph. A spare 750 was pressed into service, and put on the track at 5:30 p.m. Twenty-four hours (28½ hours of accumulated time for the riders) 691 laps and 3436.32 miles later, the 750 set five records, including 100 kilometer (146.638 mph), 1000 kilometer (144:319 mph), 6 hour (143.936), 12 hour (144.166) and 24 hour (143.180), making the VFR700's accomplishments in the same classes some of the shortest-lived in the record book.

Aside from the persistent fear of bumping into animals wandering onto the track at night, riding the VFRs was not particularly hard. Tricky, yes. Hard, no. To be sure, it

Honda engineer and former Japanese Formula 1 Champion, Kiyoshi Aizawa (1:58.19) and Ms. Baur (1:59.06; if it's true that Texas cowboys like fast women, then they should *love* Christine). Spencer and I were fastest of the non-miniature riders. I strung together a series of low 1:59s, with two back-to-back laps within 0.001-second of each other—that made my day, all 28½ hours of it.

But the unsung heroes of the record run were the pit crews, including the Team Satyr volunteers, American Honda's regular roadrace team, the scorekeepers, the Metzeler tire crew, even the FIM officials who had to witness every lap put in by both bikes.

All that's left now is to wait for official recognition from the FIM, due this fall during its annual Congress. That and for somebody else to try and break the mark we set. ●

Five-mile-long Uniroyal test track near Laredo, Texas, site of Honda's record attempt—and home of kamikaze wildlife

Who was that guy out there in the bushes with the cage full of badgers?

DUAL-PURPOSE TEST:

Yamaha XT600

The Cadillac of two-wheel switch hitters.

BY MARC COOK

It's an old story, and anyone who's been in motorcycling for more than a few years knows the plot practically by heart. This is the classic dual-purpose motorcycle dilemma: Generally, the D-P setup that works well when the pavement ends hinders the bike on the tarmac, and vice versa. It's an old saw, but no one understands it better than the engineers.

Yamaha understands that designing a D-P bike entails compromises, and that success here depends on just *how* you compromise. To help make that decision, Yamaha depended on some interesting statistics. Despite the fact that D-P bikes very much resemble, and in some cases share parts with pure-dirt machinery, these long-legged switch hitters find themselves on dirt only about 20 percent of the time. So for the remaining time, these motocross lookalikes trade punches with Bott's dots and curbs instead of whoops and berms.

Yamaha has put that information to good use with the XT600, too, because the XT—despite its YZ cum TT looks—is clearly configured more for the street than the trail. First off, the 600 is large, especially so by dirt standards, and bike's sheer size keeps it from seeming as tight and cramped as some D-P bikes. On the XT, there's plenty of room to move around, and the long, flat seat offers you more seating choices than a 747. What's more, the footpegs are low relative to the saddle, and more rearset than on many D-P bikes. As a result, the XT won't fold you up like some clever bit of origami.

Even though the XT's ergonomics aren't like those on other D-P bikes, its chassis, like the others', comes from a decidedly dirty background. Much of the 600's running gear—including bright-red frame and four-valve, dry-sump engine—hail from Yamaha's big-bore dirt thumper, the TT600. The XT's frame, especially, shows the TT influence: Its 28-degree steering head angle and stressed-member configuration are the same as on the dirt bike, and the XT's 56.3-inch wheelbase is within 2 inches of the TT's.

As with the TT600, this geometry affords a reassuring amount of chassis stability, and unlike some dual-purpose bikes, the XT proves fairly unfazed by rain grooves and railroad crossings. Yet thanks to the wide bar, the steering remains light to the touch. As a result, the XT changes direction easily, and it will go exactly where you point it, even on loose ground.

When it comes to suspension components, though, the XT parts company with its dirt-only stablemate. For example, both ends of the bike offer less suspension travel than the TT600 (according to Yamaha's figures, nearly 2 inches less in front, and almost 1.5 less in back). More important is that the XT's spring rates are far softer than the TT's, which reflects the XT's pavement priority.

You need only to take the XT out into the dirt to drive that pavement orientation forcibly home. It's not that the XT is a *bad* off-road conveyance, it just suffers from its street bias and a 317-pound heft. The XT's soft suspension means that anything above an easy pace has both ends slamming to their stops regularly. The worst offender here is the rear end, which not only lacks sufficient spring rate to control the bottoming but also needs more rebound damping to prevent the rear wheel from kicking up over moderate bumps. Up front, the story's a bit rosier, but only if you pump 10 psi into the fork legs—even then, the fork dips and dives like a drunken sailor over rough terrain or during hard braking.

Unfortunately, soft suspension rates aren't the only problems with the XT's off-road ability. And the biggest hindrance to the 600's dirt prowess is one shared by all dual-purpose bikes, too: tires. True, the Yamaha's Bridgestone Trail Wing semi-knobbies work acceptably well on hard-pack surfaces at a moderate clip, but if you try to

Continued

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 MARK FOCUS

YAMAHA XT600

push harder, they simply give up. While this makes sliding the big Yamaha through fireroad-style turns as simple as blipping the throttle, the breakaway point is so low that you can't really maintain any speed though these sections. Add in either wet ground or sand and you can plan for a day full of dabs and near lowsides.

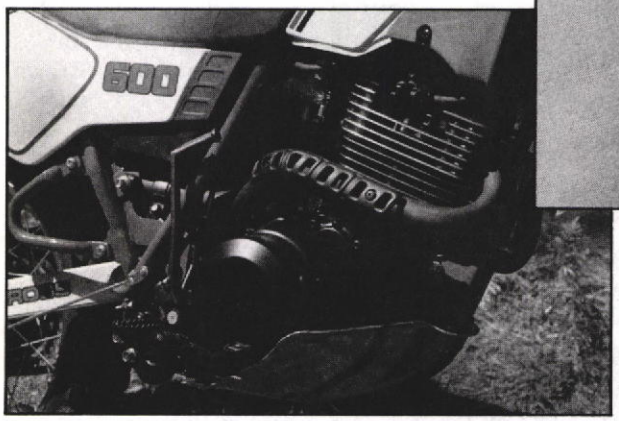
Take the XT out of the woods and onto the pavement, though, and you'll be convinced Yamaha made the right compromises. By a fair margin, the 600 is the most accommodating D-P bike going. The spring rates that don't seem to make sense in the dirt feel downright perfect on the street—both ends of the big Yamaha seem to swallow potholes and rain gutters, without ever providing more than a slight jostle to the rider. Plus, when compared to pure-street machinery, the Yamaha is a lightweight, and when you combine that with instantaneous steering response, you have one of the best point-and-shoot urban trolling devices going.

Aiding the XT's street savvy is an engine that's nothing short of four-stroke magic. From just above idle, the four-valve motor makes respectable power, and it's also strong well through the midrange. The power delivery is precisely what big four-strokes are supposed to have: Generous helpings of low-end and midrange torque. And although the 595cc engine won't rev out like some thumpers, there's enough power through the midrange to more than compensate. Moreover, the XT proves to be one of the easiest-to-start thumpers we've tried: By using the tried-and-true ritual—no throttle and full choke when cold, no choke and just a crack of throttle when warm—the 600 lights on the first or second kick, every time.

Accurate carburetion accounts for part of the XT's willing nature. Thanks to Yamaha's Duo Intake System (YDIS)—essentially dual intake ports fed by a staged two-barrel carburetor—the XT carburets crisply from low

Single-piston caliper grips jumbo disc

Roadgoing bits with a feel for the dirt.



Four-valve engine looks the part of modern big single

But its bottomless torque curve is classic thumper.

YAMAHA XT600

Importer: Yamaha Motor Corp. U.S.A.,
6555 Katella Ave.
Cypress, California 90630

Category	dual-purpose
Suggested retail price	$2449
Engine type	four-stroke vertical single
Valve arrangement	single overhead camshaft four valves per cylinder
Bore and stroke	95.0mm x 84.0mm
Displacement	595.4cc
Compression ratio	8.5:1
Carburetion	one two-barrel Teikei Kikaki; 27mm slide/needle primary venturi, 27mm constant-vacuum secondary venturi
Gearbox	5-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	Kayaba, 41mm stanchion tube diameter/9.4 in. (240mm)
Rear shock/wheel travel	Yamaha, 5-position adjustable rebound damping, 21mm spring preload range/9.2 in. (233mm)
Weight	317 lbs. (143.8kg)
Wheelbase	55.7 to 56.9 in. (1415 to 1445mm)
Seat height	34.3 in. (870mm)
Steering head angle	28.0 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail	4.21 in. (107mm)
Fuel tank	steel, 2.9 gal. (11.0/), including 0.4 gal. (1.5/) reserve
Best ¼-mile acceleration	14.629 sec., 86.12 mph (139 kph)
Stopping distance from 60 mph	154 ft. (46.9m)
Fuel consumption	46 to 63 mpg (20 to 27 km/l)
Warranty	12 months, unlimited mileage
Available color	white only

rpm, and gives the motor an idle as stable as the Statue of Liberty's finances. At small throttle openings, only the primary throat provides mixture—and its small size relative to the engine's benefits intake velocity, which aids low-range power and throttle response. When the twistgrip is whacked open, both venturis come alive to feed the massive 95mm piston. And it's under those circumstances that the XT's dual carbs falter: Occasionally the engine will hesitate as the secondary venturi opens, and although this is most noticeable above 4500 rpm, the characteristic is there all through the rev band.

Aside from the high-tech carburetor, the XT's engine is straightforward in specification—in fact, little has changed on this robust powerplant since its displacement increase from 558cc to 595cc in 1983. And like most big-bore four-strokes, the XT engine uses dry-sump lubrication, where oil for the motor and five-speed transmission is stored in an external tank. On the TT600 and the street-only SRX6, this tank lives between the frame rails behind the engine. But because of space considerations, the XT's tanks lies directly behind the left sidecover, and with only that plastic panel as protection, the tank seems almost unpardonably vulnerable to damage in a fall.

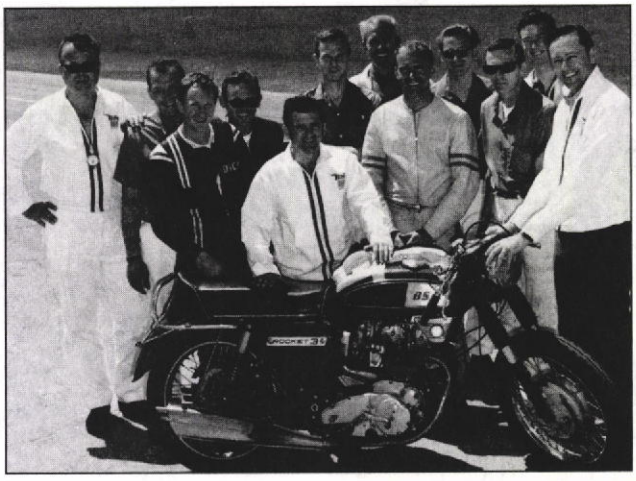
That might seem like a glaring error to dedicated dirt riders, who know that anything that can break usually will. But it also helps to illustrate Yamaha's intentions with the bike. By realizing that most D-P bikes spend the majority of their miles on the pavement, Yamaha has given itself the freedom to skew the XT600's hardware toward street work. And with this bike, it works. All told, the XT is a honest-to-dirt blast to ride on the street, yet it's still acceptable as an occasional trail-going mount. In truth, there's no black magic being worked here; Yamaha simply has struck a fine balance, based on a realistic appraisal of the bike's use. And the result is just a well-authored conclusion to the old dual-purpose story. •

A Matter of Record

Don Brown and the Rocket men.

BY JERRY SMITH

As more manufacturers seek to publicize new models with high-speed endurance runs, it almost seems anyone with a trained pit crew, a limitless supply of racing tires and 24 hours to spare can set a record or two. But setting speed records to publicize new motorcycles isn't a recent innovation; in 1977, Kawasaki introduced its KZ650 by setting a number of AMA and FIM 750cc records, running three six-rider teams on modified KZ650s. Less known, however, was an attempt eight years before, when a few men established a handful of records on stock motorcycles, backed by little more than a dozen or so street tires, a little bit of luck—and several barrels of ice.



Don Brown was the moving force behind the record runs that took place at Daytona in early April 1969. A few months prior to that, Brown, as vice president and general manager of BSA Inc., had received a letter summoning him to a meeting in England about the new three-cylinder 750cc BSA Rocket Three and Triumph Trident. The factory wanted suggestions from Brown, Earl Miller and Pete Colman, Brown's counterparts in Triumph Inc. and Triumph/BSA West, on how to publicize the new triples.

The usual course of action on such occasions was to arrange press introductions, media presentations and the like—pretty tame stuff. But Brown wanted something with more impact. So he went to see William T. Berry, executive director of the AMA. "We have a new machine we're about to introduce," Brown told Berry, "and we think it's capable of speeds in excess of 130 mph in absolutely stock trim"—a somewhat sensational pronouncement at the time—"but we're not absolutely sure."

Brown needed the AMA's help to find out. He proposed renting Daytona Speedway, bringing four Rockets and four riders—Yvon duHamel, Dick Mann, Ray Hempstead and Cycle magazine editor Gordon Jennings—to the tri-oval, and running the bikes as fast as possible for as long as possible. Brown wanted the AMA not only to sanction the event and certify whatever speeds were achieved, but to inspect the bikes afterward and verify that they were absolutely stock inside and out. There was just one hitch: If the attempt proved unsuccessful, or the speeds disappointingly slow, at Brown's discretion there would be absolutely no publicity, period, a proviso also imposed on Jennings.

After some negotiation, Berry finally pledged the AMA's cooperation. But there was still the small matter of that meeting in England. A short time later, as he, Colman and Miller sat facing the board of BSA and Triumph, waiting to deliver their proposals, Brown wondered if he'd still have a job at the close of the meeting. Because he had gone ahead and leased Daytona, hired the riders and made the secret arrangements with the AMA before his arrival in England—and before telling anyone else about his plan. "The checks were already written, it was a done deal," he recalled. "As it happened, I was the last one to speak that day. Earl and Pete outlined their plans, and they were good, solid, basic things involving the media, motorcycle magazines, promotions, trade shows and the like. When I announced my idea, there was a minor explosion."

Brown's job survived the blast, though. His scheme was approved, and the factory dispatched four new Rockets to BSA's American service department. The four were disassembled and inspected piece by piece. Brown ordered any defective or out-of-spec parts to be replaced from BSA's normal stock. Finally the bikes were blueprinted, reassembled and calibrated to stock specifications, and shipped to Florida.

The first day at Daytona was miserably hot, with the track temperature more than 112 degrees. Since the team had no prior experience with jetting, gearing or preparing the new

Rocket for continuous flat-out running, Brown simply sent all four riders out that Thursday to see what they could do. Earlier, through extensive analysis of the Rocket's power and torque characteristics and gearing, Brown had chosen 130 mph as the minimum lap speed to be maintained during any record attempt. Anything slower, he figured, would result in unacceptably low average speeds.

"As I recall," said Brown, "our initial speeds were so disappointing that we very nearly called the whole thing off. I think we were lapping in the 124–125 mph range. But most of the money had already been spent—the track was leased for three days, and duHamel and Mann were already under contract—so we had no choice but to keep plugging away."

In addition to the disappointing speeds, the Dunlop K81 street tires mounted front and rear suffered extensively from the heat. Those that lasted did so because the riders went easy on them—the rest chunked or blew. The K81s were considered the best street tire of their day, but it became obvious that the Rocket was faster than any standard tire. Nevertheless, on that first day duHamel established a 200-mile record of 123.140, as well as records for five miles (128.205), 15 miles (128.07), 20 miles (128.03), 25 miles (128.10) and 50 miles (127.57). Mann set 100-mile (125.99) and 150-mile (125.72) records; a good beginning, but still far below what Brown knew and expected the bikes could do.

The four Rockets had come to the Speedway equipped with 50-tooth rear sprockets, two teeth smaller than stock. But as Dick Mann pointed out that evening over dinner, he was only seeing about 7400 rpm on his Rocket's tach at the end of the straightaway, too low, he thought, for the pushrod triple to be on the cams. So on Friday, another scorcher, Competition Supervisor Herb Neas sent the bikes out onto the tri-oval with 54-tooth sprockets. Neas hoped to enable the engines to run higher revs on the banking and, as a result, achieve higher speeds. With the change, duHamel not only set a one-hour record of 127.615, but topped Mann's records of the previous day, too. The Canadian turned in a 100-mile speed of 127.625 and a 150-mile speed of 127.528, but the attempt to go for a 200-mile record was cut short by tire failure due to the intense heat.

Meanwhile, Mann, Hempstead and Jennings joined forces to pilot a Rocket nicknamed Old Faithful—the same machine duHamel had flogged mercilessly for more than 230 miles the previous day—to an unofficial four-

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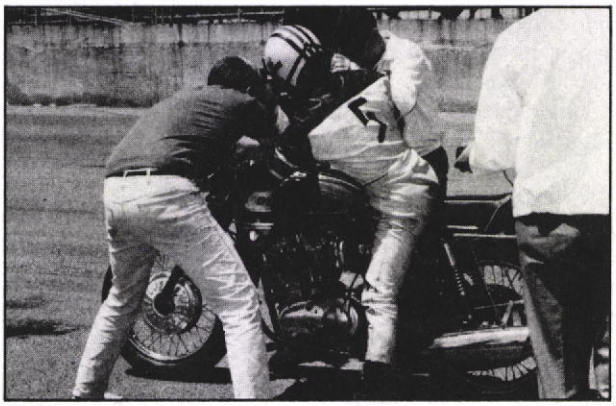
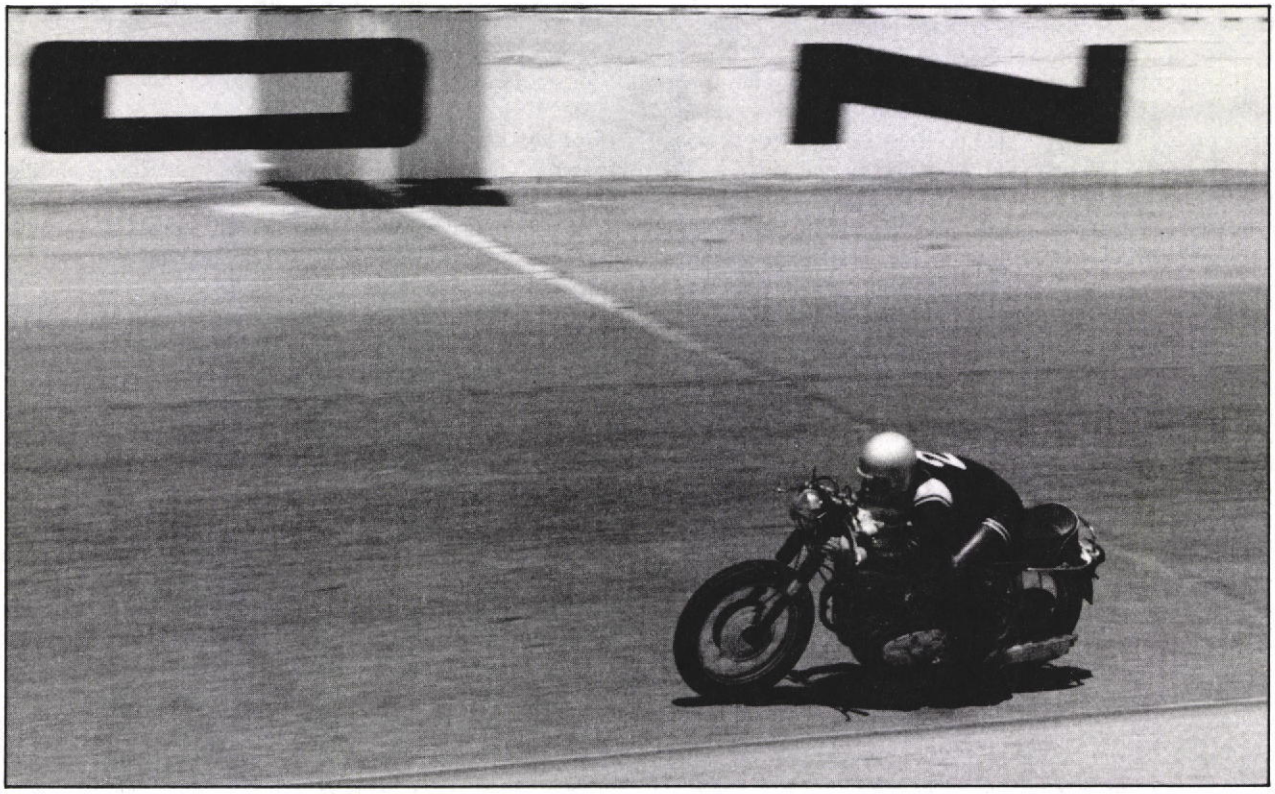




PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 DAYTONA INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY/D.J. BROWN COLLECTION

Dick Mann, an inseparable part of the BSA legend, helping to write a new chapter aboard the Rocket

Co-authors Brown, duHamel, Hempstead and Jennings share the byline with a pushrod triple.

hour record. Old Faithful, though capable of running faster, was held to around 120 mph to slow tire wear. As the four-hour mark approached and Hempstead stopped for gas about four or five laps short of the cutoff time, Brown told him to do the remaining laps wide open. Hempstead responded with four laps at just over 127 mph, proving Old Faithful had it all along. The resulting four-hour average of 117.545 mph, however, was never submitted for certification, because Brown thought it too low.

In fact, even though they set records nearly every time they went out on the track, the four Rockets still weren't delivering the 130-mph lap speeds Brown wanted. The bikes had been checked and double-checked for carburetion frets, ignition bothers and just plain gremlins. With only one day left in which to achieve the desired speeds, Brown, by his own admission, was getting "pretty hard to live with." Finally, at Mann's and Jennings' urgings, Brown decided to fit all four Rockets with stock gearing for Saturday's runs. He also insisted everyone get to bed early the night before and be at the track the next morning well before dawn to take all possible advantage of the cool morning air and its favorable effects on horsepower and tire life.

The next morning dawned cooler than anyone had expected—or wanted. A thick blanket of fog lay over the Speedway, reducing visibility to near zero even after the sun was well up. In the chill dawn, the barrels of ice Brown had ordered to cool the team's gasoline supply seemed a redundant precaution.

Hoping the weather conditions would soon change in their favor, the team, with the sounds of their preparations muffled by fog, readied the four BSAs for their final assault on the 130-mph barrier. The game plan went like this: First, wait until the last minute before fuelling up the bikes with dense, chilled gasoline. Next, since it had been determined that duHamel, regardless of which machine he rode, was always a few thousandths quicker than anyone else, he would go out on the fastest bike. As soon as the fog lifted high enough for good visibility, he would bring the bike up to speed and signal the pits to start the clocks.

There wasn't a moment to lose. At any time the thinning overcast could give way to the searing sun, and months of work would evaporate with the fog. Brown watched anxiously as the Canadian sped by the pits, showing the thumbs-up sign to start the clocks. If duHamel's first lap was up to expectations, Brown would return the sign, and the run would begin. If not, it would be a long, quiet drive back to BSA headquarters in New Jersey. As duHamel crossed the finish line the next time, the clocks registered a one-lap speed better than 132 mph. Brown instantly responded with a jubilant thumbs-up, and the real record attempt was under way.

"I was so damn happy," remembered Brown, who checked not only the offical clocks manned by AMA timers but a set of hand-held stopwatches brought by Berry. DuHamel's next few laps were all over 130 mph, and his third lap, an average of 131.790 mph, was fast enough to have placed him and the bone-stock Rocket in the middle of the starting field for that year's Daytona 200.

Herb Neas (right) and Champion rep check BSA's plugs

Closing the gap between the Rocket and high speed.

As the throaty bellow of the BSA triple echoed off the high banking, duHamel averaged over 130 mph lap after lap. He set records at five miles (131.723), 15 miles (131.004), 20 miles (130.759), 25 miles (130.605) and 50 miles (130.014). Shortly after the 50-mile mark, however, a nail in the rear tire ended what might have been a new 200-mile record. With too little time left to try for another 200 miles, but with its goal accomplished, the team called it a day and settled back to tally the records it had set in "Class C Production Standard," the category subsequently created by the AMA especially for the BSA attempt.

Today, Brown knows that any one of a dozen of today's superbikes could probably erase the BSA records without even using top gear. But he also suspects that no one has yet broken those records, much less even entered the Class C Production Standard class since those three days in April of 1969. That class was created by the AMA for the BSA record attempt, and, as far as Brown is able to determine, up until now the AMA has never sanctioned another attempt in that particular class. It's one of the delicious ironies of time that the BSA Rocket Three might still be one of the fastest production motorcycles—on record. •

PRODUCT EVALUATION:

NRG Saver Tire Changer

Drawing a bead on tire changing.

• You're hot, sweaty and mad. You've cut your hand, ripped your jeans, and you still can't get the old tire off your bike's rim. Changing tires at home without expensive shop equipment can be a frustrating and painful ordeal, especially when pinched tubes, stubborn beads or shiny rims complicate matters. But now there's help from NRG Saver, a tool that helps take the skinned knuckles and lacerated Levi's out of do-it-yourself tire changes. The kit consists of an 8¾-inch bar with a Teflon hook on one end, two curved plastic attachments and two Teflon-covered tire irons.

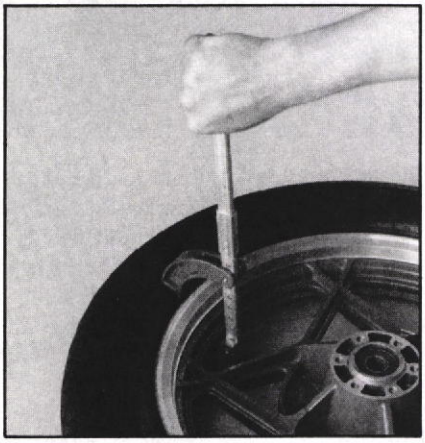
The first step toward keeping your wardrobe and the skin on your knuckles intact is to choose one of the two curved attachments, which connect to the bar with a retaining screw. The tool's hooked end is threaded through the spokes and the hook slipped between the rim and tire bead, while the pivoting attachment is placed against the other bead of the tire, near the rim. Then by simply prying outward on the tool, the two ends provide a pincer effect that usually pops the bead easily, in most cases before you've called the paramedics or even worked up a sweat.

And once you've broken the bead, you can remove the tire the rest of the way with the two NRG tire irons. Their coated ends protect the finish on aluminum rims and cast wheels, but their extra thickness, thanks to the Teflon, makes them somewhat more difficult to use than non-coated irons.

The NRG tool can finish what it starts, too, making it easier to pry that last difficult section of tire over the rim. On really stiff tires, you can ignore the tire irons and use only the tool to do the complete installation. This method is slower but practically guarantees you won't scratch the rim—or pinch a tube—in the process.

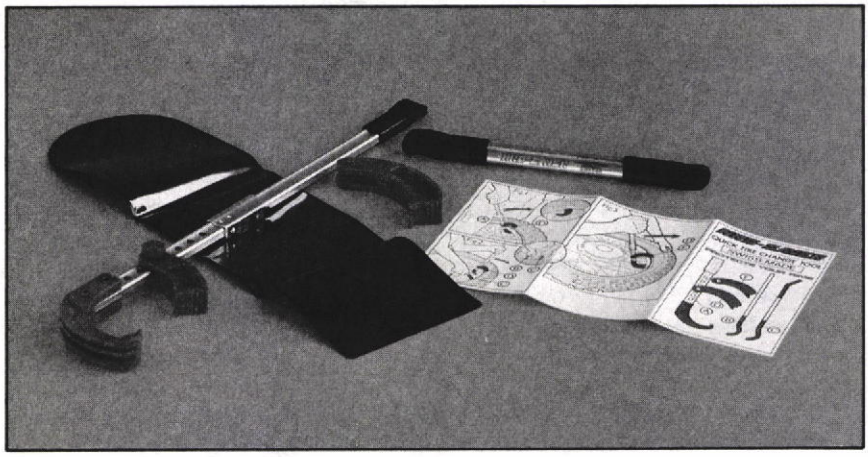
The NRG bead breaker has a few limitations, though. In many instances you'll have to resort to other, more drastic methods to break the bead on wide streetbike wheels. But with most middle- or lightweight bikes, and nearly all dirtbikes, the NRG Saver takes a lot of the blood, sweat and tears out of tire changing. And for the price of a couple of pairs of Levi's, it should start paying for itself the next time you change a tire. —*Bill Wolf*

NRG Saver
Distributor: Lazer Helmets Inc., Dept. CG, 31139 Via Colinas, Suite 302, Westlake Village, California 91362-3931
Suggested retail price: $49.95



NRG saves more than just energy

Breaking the bead, not your back.



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LEARNER'S FILE:

The Freshman Class

So what do you say when a newcomer asks about a first-time ride?

BY JOE KRESS

Look around. Entry-level bikes have changed since a lot of us took a first ride. That might have been during the great motorcycle boom of the '60s, a time fueled by step-through 50s and low-stakes-to-the-extreme 125s. In fact, it's a safe bet that many of today's veteran riders, the ones now on Aspencades or Eliminators and with traces of gray around the temples, took their first, wide-eyed spin aboard one of those tiddlers of the '60s.

That was more than 25 years ago. Things were simpler; what satisfied us as motorcycling neophytes wouldn't come even close for today's crop. Today's first-time rider has *seen* better and *wants* better. Today's first-timer wants a real motorcycle, not some loose approximation like those buzz-saw 50s. Now, maybe more so than any time in recent history, that first-timer has choices. All four Japanese manufacturers have refocused attention back to the basics, presenting the beginner with an array of real, honest-to-God motorcycles. They could be just what he wants but doesn't know exists. A few these machines even warrant a hard look from the old hand.

Honda's Rebel 250 and 450 are perfect examples of this mid-'80s-style entry equipment. Sure, a $1398 buy-in for the 250 takes a certain commitment, but so did $250 from you back in the '60s. And unlike those old step-throughs, the Rebel is a real motorcycle. Its long wheelbase aids stability, yet its light weight and gentle power delivery make it no more intimidating than those old step-throughs. Here's a bike that's easily mastered. But from the saddle of a Rebel, there's every bit of the look, feel and sensation of genuine motorcycling. This isn't just low-cost, two-wheeled transportation. This is the bona fide article.

And that low-stakes Honda isn't alone. Suzuki's new Savage, an electric-start single, is, in '80s-speak, equally accessible. At $1999, it isn't likely to send new prospects into financial shock, either. Like the Rebel, the Savage is cast in the classic American mold—the cruiser. It has that lean, clean, laid-back look most U.S. riders, new *or* old, want. The bike's 650cc single is no toy, either, but this Suzuki's light weight and low seat should make it all painless for a newcomer. So now when that kid down the street asks what's a good first-time cruiser, you can confidently point him toward Honda or Suzuki.

But what if he has visions of twisting roads and downhill sweepers? Not a problem, not anymore. Now, instead of being overwhelmed, both in price and performance, by a full-on sportbike, a new rider could jump right in on the 250cc twin-cylinder version of Kawasaki's Ninja. Here's a bike *guaranteed* to just get better and deliver more smiles as its rider improves his skills. $2299 buys a truly serious sportbike here. A docile-at-the-start eight-valve engine revs to an astronomical 14,000-rpm redline, with a respectable wallop concentrated up top. It's the perfect trainer for developing engine-speed/gear-choice feel. And a genuine Ninja-style chassis—with disc brakes, Uni-Trak suspension, 16-inch wheels with top-line Dunlops—provides more than just a foundation for learning the basics. This bike has to rate toward the top of the list as one of the sweetest handling motorcycles on the road, period.

Yamaha hasn't overlooked this '80s-style entry market, either. For $2499, its SRX600S single is right in there, putting a new twist on an old classic—the sporting thumper. What better learning platform? Stall a kick-start single at an intersection once, and you won't do it many times after that. Clutch/throttle coordination become second nature real quick. It has to. Some might say this is akin to kicking a kid off the end of the dock and into the deep water. Truth is, '80s-era singles aren't all that hard to start.

A better choice for a new rider might be the 600cc inline-four-powered Radian. Here's as complete a motorcycle as they come. This '86 blend of old and new Yamaha hardware shows real promise of doing it all. And on a beginner's budget to boot. For $2399, this one comes with

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 JOE KRESS

There's a bumper crop of new bikes and would-be new riders out there, but somtimes the two just don't meet

With the help of an old hand who knows where to look picking that first bike is a cinch.

FJ600 power, a tried-and-true 550 Maxim-style frame, contemporary bodywork and as much go-anywhere, do-anything capability as delivered in machines costing twice the price. It's a tough combination to beat. It should be even tougher for a newcomer to pass on.

And these are just some of the bikes in this mid-'80s entry-machine field. By no means are these the only examples of viable first-time hardware. Bikes like the 450 Suzuki twin, 450 Honda Nighthawk, 500 Shadow and Kawasaki's 454 LTD all make perfect starting points. They're also all excellent recommendations to give first-timers. So do everyone involved a favor, please. When an aspiring rider asks you about entry-level equipment, don't start reminiscing about 50cc step-throughs or 125s. He wants a motorcycle.

So point him to one. . . . •

PRODUCT EVALUATION:

Harley-Davidson Touring Jacket

A fit of passion.

• After riding pillion for years, more women are joining the mainstream of motorcycling and loving it. Still, finding a bike that fits and has the right features can sometimes be a lot easier than finding a leather jacket with those traits. One riding-wear option is the women's version of Harley-Davidson's Touring Jacket. It includes the well-thought-out features of the men's version—but it's designed for women.

Fashioned by Hein Gericke from supple, vat-dyed leather, the jacket's medium length covers the tops of the hipbones in front and curves down in back to cover the lower back, even if your posture is the forward lean of a sportbike rider. An action-back vertical center pleat allows comfortable arm and shoulder movement for passenger or pilot, and an extra layer of leather protects the elbows.

Complementing the female figure, a narrow half-belt is anchored at the sides and fastens in front with D-rings. In the back, the waistline is elasticized to keep air from coming in, with gathered leather below that flares over the hips. Long-waisted women and those who wear low-waisted jeans (Levi's 501s, for instance) might notice a small gap that a strong wind will sometimes reach, but that's the case with any other off-the-rack jacket with its belt at the waist. Besides, as my grandmother used to say, "we must suffer some for beauty's sake."

You don't need to suffer on hot days, though. The Touring Jacket provides you with ventilation thanks to zippers at the wrists and under the arms. The underarm zippers cover perforated leather folds that, when uncovered, allow a breeze to flow through your jacket.

When you're done with the breezes and ready for warmth, a couple of other features come into play. The collar can be snapped down at the front corners and turned up in back to keep the wind off your neck. The belt can be tightened to keep air out at the waist. And the best part: The vest-shaped liner snaps into the jacket in seconds.

Even worn by itself, the liner feels like a heating blanket turned up to high, and attaching it to the jacket is second only to adding an electric vest. And for the *really* cold-blooded, there's still room for a sweater. The only drawback is that the liner doesn't cover a four-inch-wide vertical gap down the front of the jacket. Despite a storm flap behind the zipper, the gap in the lining creates a gully between the breasts where wind can come in through the neck and zipper. Adding a scarf or neck sock and tightening the belt as much as possible helps cut down on the chill, though.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1986 DAVID DEWHURST

H-D's Touring Jacket has you covered for either dog days or a three-dog night

Thermal versatility in a garment designed specifically for women.

Four outside pockets and snapping shoulder straps seem to be for decoration only. The "large chest pockets" (as denoted in Harley's brochure) are useful only to draw attention to one's chest; carrying anything bulkier than facial tissue is uncomfortable and looks strange. The lower two "hand warmer" pockets are warm and spacious but, alas, are placed too far back to get one's hands in or out comfortably. Also, the snaps on these and the inside wallet pocket scrape fingers and knuckles.

Despite its few drawbacks, this jacket performs well in a range of temperatures: It can keep you cool enough for hot summer riding or warm enough for late spring, early fall or mild-weather after-dark riding. In a time when bike manufacturers are starting to take women's needs seriously, the H-D Touring Jacket does the same thing for women's riding wear.

—Mary Austin

Harley-Davidson Touring Jacket
Available from: Harley-Davidson dealers nationwide
Available color: black
Available sizes: Women's 32–42; Men's regular 36–48; Men's long 36–54
Suggested retail prices: Women's $199.95; Men's regular $209.95; Men's long $219.95

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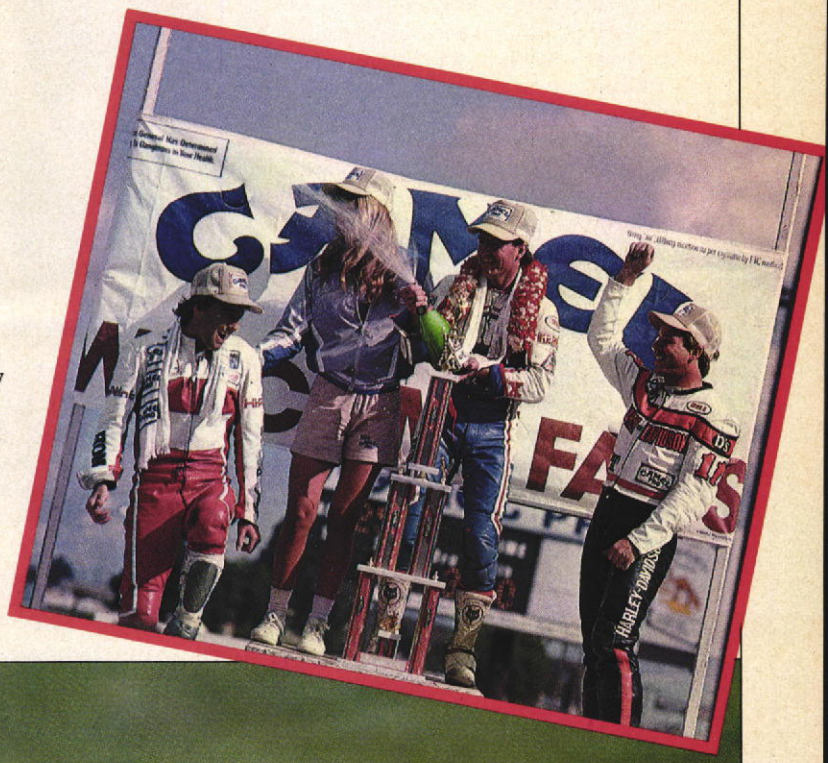
Cycle Guide's True Tales of Racecourses, Dark Horses and Machines at Speed

BY DAIN GINGERELLI

Shobert Sizzles

He's got the mechanics of winning down pat.



• No racer likes to restart a race. Red flags, no matter why they're used, are a technicality that most riders would rather avoid. But you couldn't blame Bubba Shobert, Camel Pro Series defending champion, if he has acquired a fondness for red-flagged events. In two races last spring, the Phoenix Half-Mile and the San Jose Mile, Shobert came from both restarts to win each time.

Shobert's victory at Phoenix was a landmark in his racing career, too; he joined Kenny Roberts and Dick Mann as the only riders in AMA history to win in all

Continued

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five forms of Grand National racing: Mile, Half-Mile, Shorttrack, TT and Roadrace. Unofficially, of course, he completed the Grand Slam in 1984, but his win at the Hagerstown Half-Mile was revoked after an AMA review board upheld a six-race suspension for fighting.

And it looked like his efforts might again be frustrated at Phoenix, when the race was halted on the third lap because of excessive dust on the track. At the time, Shobert was well out in front. "When I saw the red flag," he said after his win, "I thought they just didn't want me to win it." After the restart, though, he took the win—and the Grand Slam.

The following week at San Jose, with the CPS point lead finally in his grasp, Shobert was ready to conclude the California swing of the CPS at the San Jose Mile and Ascot Half-Mile. Indeed, things were back to normal in the Honda camp. Even Shobert's tuner, Skip Eagen, remained taciturn and somewhat unmoved by Shobert's accomplishment at Phoenix the previous week. When a well-wisher congratulated Eagen about the fifth notch in Shobert's gun belt, the Honda mechanic looked surprised and said, "Huh, oh, yeah." With afterthought, he added, "Thanks."

Neither Eagen nor Shobert forgot about the pack of hungry wolves on their tails at San Jose, though. The list included three fast Team Harley riders—the boyish-looking but always tough Scott Parker; flat-tracking's *Wunderkind,* Chris Carr; and Jay Springsteen. The Harleys were fast, too: Parker proved that at Sacramento a month before. Any pressure the Team Harleys couldn't produce was provided by ex-teammate Ricky Graham, the Honda-mounted hometown favorite. And if that wasn't enough, Doug Chandler played his trump card in his heat race with Shobert, hounding No. 1 for the lead the entire 10 laps. It was going to be a tough day at the

Last turn, last lap at San Jose; Shobert shadows Parker

Five riders dragrace the final quarter-mile to the checkered flag.

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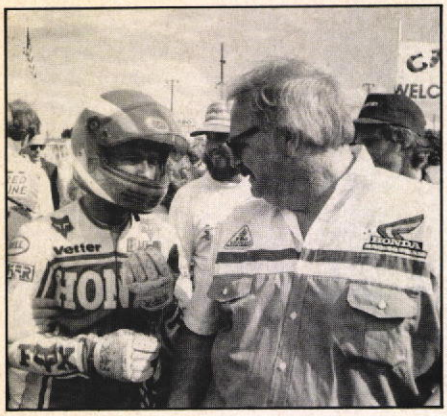

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Shobert and Eagen in victory circle

The mechanics of winning.

Carr was fastest while he lasted

Harley-Davidson's new Wunderkind.

Santa Clara Fairgrounds for the winner, whoever he was.

After a slow start, Carr elbowed his way to the front of the pack during the 25-lap Main. The Mert Lawwill-tuned XR750 suited Carr's jockeylike size, and he used it to leave the faster, higher revving Hondas off the corners. But by the 15th mile, Carr's threat was over when his engine lost its will to live entering Turn One.

Even after Carr bowed out, the San Jose fans were left with a brawl involving five riders—Shobert, Graham, Chandler, and the remaining Team Harley duo, Parker and Springsteen. And for the final 10 laps, all five riders put their best feet forward at the finish line. Calling a winner was like predicting the winner of the Irish Sweepstakes. "I knew I was beating Scott (Parker) to the finish line," Shobert said after his win, "but some other guys were beating me there. So I just hoped I'd beat them." Mile racing is like that.

Parker appeared to have things his way through the corners, using the XR's wider powerband to advantage over the Honda's. But he just couldn't shake the Honda draft down the straights. His only chance was to lead coming out of Turn Four on the final go-round, and sprint to the finish line. He grabbed the lead somewhere between Turns Three and Four, where the San Jose oval gets really tight, then scooted out onto the straightaway for his dash to the checkered flag. Only he got *real sideways,* and spun the rear tire coming off Turn Four.

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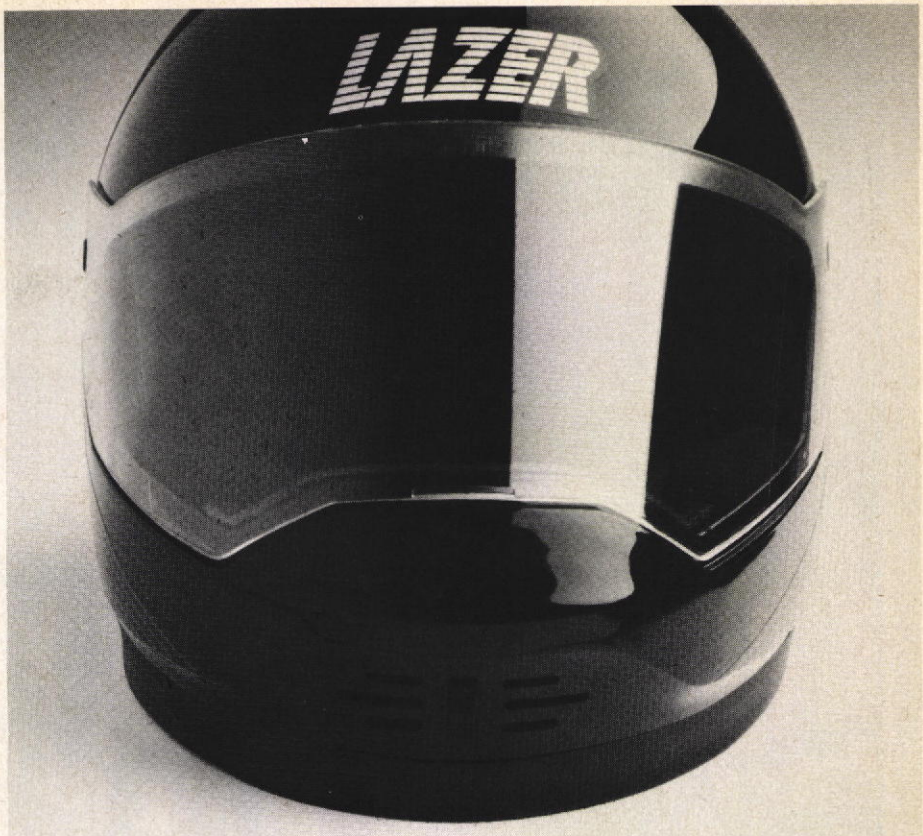

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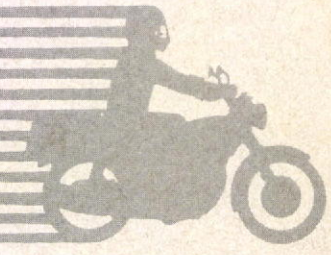

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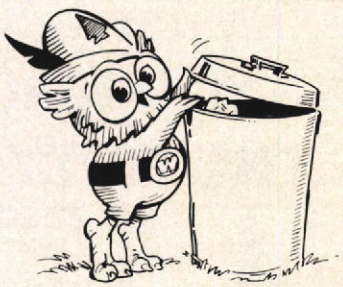

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"I got a little sideways coming out of there, and that's all it took," he said in victory circle. Then, despite losing by less than a wheel, Parker gave his traditional war whoop to the fans, a trademark that is as much a part of his victory-circle ceremony as spraying champagne.

Indeed, the quarters were close coming out of the final turn. When someone suggested that a couple of the riders bumped on that last lap charge, Chandler, who finished fourth, sandwiched between third-place finisher Graham and fifth-place Springsteen, said, "I didn't think anybody hit each other. It was close, but I trust riding with these guys."

"Close" would be an understatement. "It was a classic Mile race," Graham said. "You won't get a better race than today." With 46 lead changes in 25 laps, this spring's Mile was the closest in years.

But while the crowd was reveling in one of the best San Jose Miles yet, Shobert was busy celebrating his win—his 14th career Mile win, most in AMA history: "It felt good to set that record," he said, "I like racing on Mile tracks the best, and it was a record I had wanted to achieve." But while Shobert's celebration continued, some of the riders were already winding down. Graham, in particular, was already looking forward to the following day. "Two good guys beat me," he said afterwards. "But I'm going to beat them on the golf course tomorrow." Fortunately for Graham, they don't call for restarts in golf.

Shobert displays the laurels

Turning red into black and white.

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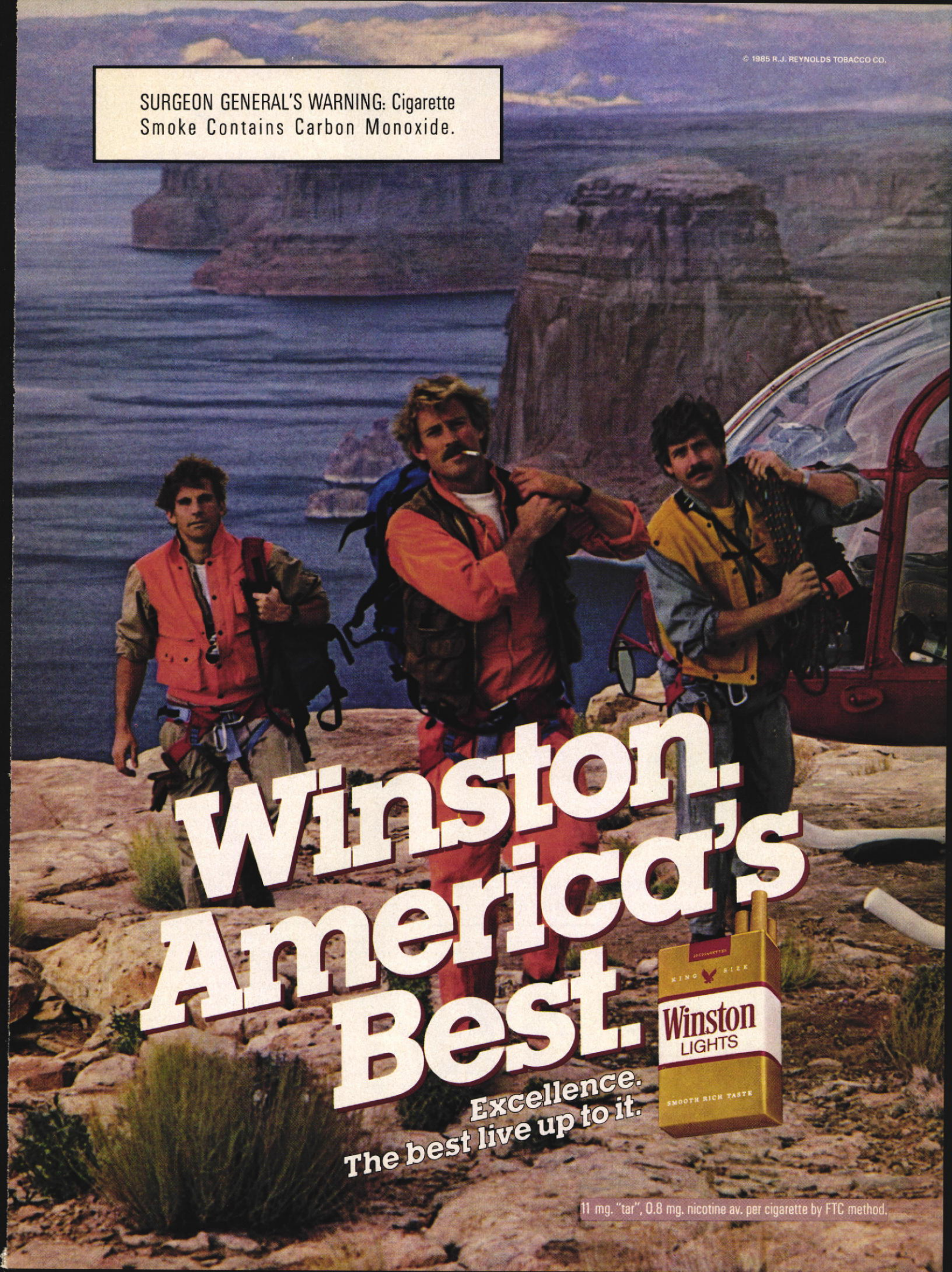
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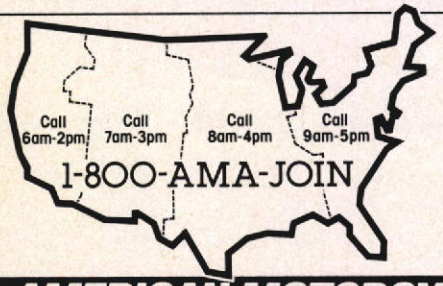

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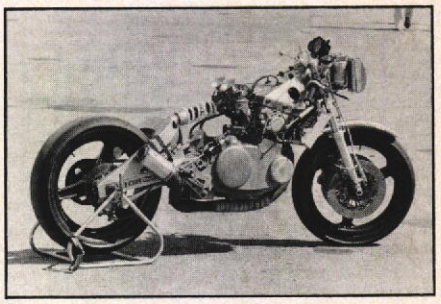
ROADRACING:

Norton-Cosworth BOTT

The Empire strikes back.



Space-age frame for an English twin

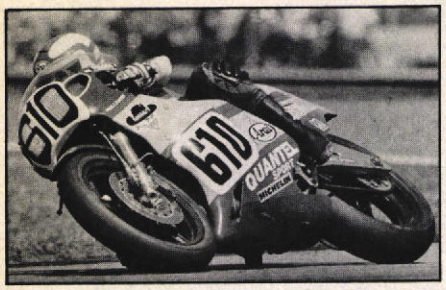
Yet it steers like a good Norton.

• The English are colonizing America again. Their foothold in the New World is Daytona Beach, Florida, where the Union Jack has been displayed with subdued passion following Formula 2 races, including second- and third-place finishes by EMC and Armstrong 250cc two-strokes.

This year, The Empire's expansionist movement carried the Union Jack deeper yet into U.S. territory—into Daytona's Battle of the Twins victory circle, domain recently considered for American bikes only. In fact, the Yanks were ousted not only by the Brits but the Italians as well, winners of this year's race, thanks to Marco Lucchinelli and Ducati-Cagiva. Australian Paul Lewis rode the British-built Norton-Cosworth to second, ahead of defending BOTT champion, Gene Church (Harley-Davidson).

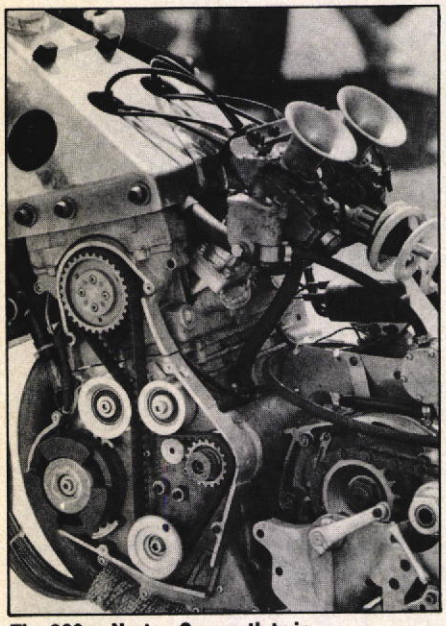
The Norton-Cosworth BOTT project dates back to the ill-fated Norton and Cosworth program of the late '70s, and was picked up years later, when Bob Graves bought stock in Cosworth Engineering. Graves' passion rested with motorcycles, and when he saw that there were three of the original Cosworth-Norton vertical twins remaining in the warehouse, he expressed interest in using them for racing. "Keith Duckworth (co-founder of Cosworth) told me not to darken the doorstep with it," Graves recalls, "then handed the engines over to me."

The 820cc engine originally had fuel injection. While this version produced nearly 120 horsepower, its throttle response was too abrupt. So Graves, with the help of mechanic Gary Flood and former world champion (autos *and* bikes) John Surtees, adapted Amal carburetion to the dual-overhead-camshaft engine. The twin (bore and stroke of 90mm x 64mm) still revs to 10,500 rpm ("11,250 for short races in England," reports Graves), peaking at 100 horsepower, but with a more usable spread than the injected motor's.



Paul Lewis during the Daytona BOTT

Invading the colonials' beach.



The 820cc Norton-Cosworth twin

100 horses galloping at 10,500 rpm.

Quaife, makers of vintage-motorcycle parts, made a special five-speed transmission for Graves, then the 185 pound engine was slipped into the aluminum monocoque frame. According to Graves, the monocoque structure, built by Exact-Weld, is extremely rigid, keeping the 400-pound racer steady at any speed.

Surtees helped fine tune the chassis, and opted for a 26 degree steering head angle. In his words, the Norton-Cosworth racer steers "basically like a good Norton." And that, said Surtees, is the highest compliment he gives any racebike, British or otherwise.

The remainder of the bike follows comtemporary racebike trends, including Lockheed brakes, White Power rear shock, Suzuki Gamma Mk. 9 fork, and 18-inch Michelin tires. And with Lewis aboard, it performs like a contemporary racer, too. His second-place finish at Daytona is proof.

Shortly after the Daytona Expedition, Graves took his troops home to regroup and retrain on British short tracks. Will they be back? "I hope to return next year," he said. In the meantime, the colonials are seeking revolutionary ways to counter the British invasion. *—Dain Gingerelli*

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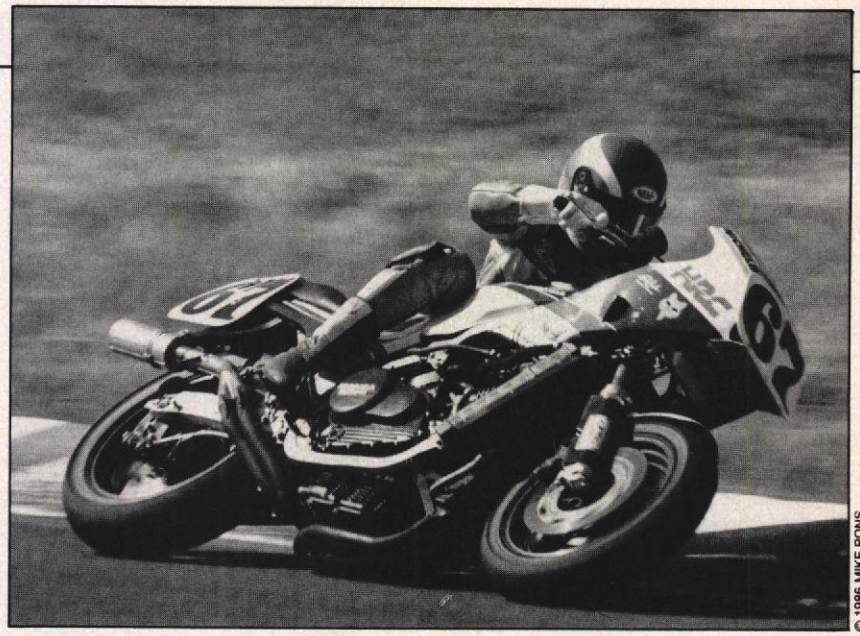

Bubba Shobert did his shopping at Sears Point last May

Look for the Texan to wear continental-styled apparel in the future, though.

• The eyes of Texas are upon Europe: Bubba Shobert *had* intentions of racing Formula 2 with a Honda RS250S this year. But that changed after Daytona, and now the Camel Pro Series champ will ride a Superbike in the roadrace portion of the CPS this year. Shobert's second ride on a 1985 Interceptor netted him a second-place finish at Sears Point last May. According to Honda's roadrace team manger, Udo Gietl, Shobert's Superbike effort is not officially sanctioned by Honda. "We will, however, help with parts and technical assistance," Gietl added. Chances are that the 24-year-old Texan has his sights set on Europe in the next few years.

• A two-horse race: If dynomometers are any indication, Mile racing on the Camel Pro Series should be a real horse race between Honda and Harley-Davidson riders this year. Before the San Jose Mile last May, three riders tested their engines on the same dynomometer: Steve Moorehead's XR750 reportedly produced 89 horsepower, while privateer Terry Poovey allegedly saw 92 and Hank Scott caught a staggering 102 horsepower with their Honda engines. As for their SJ results, Poovey failed to transfer to the Main, while Scott and Moorehead finished seventh and 15th.

• One tire pony: While the question of horsepower remains a significant part of racing, the matter of tires has evaded the Camel Pro Series riders for the past couple of years. Ever since Goodyear dropped out in 1983, the riders have been loyal to Carlisle. That might change soon. Goodyear and Continental have flattrack tires, and according to one

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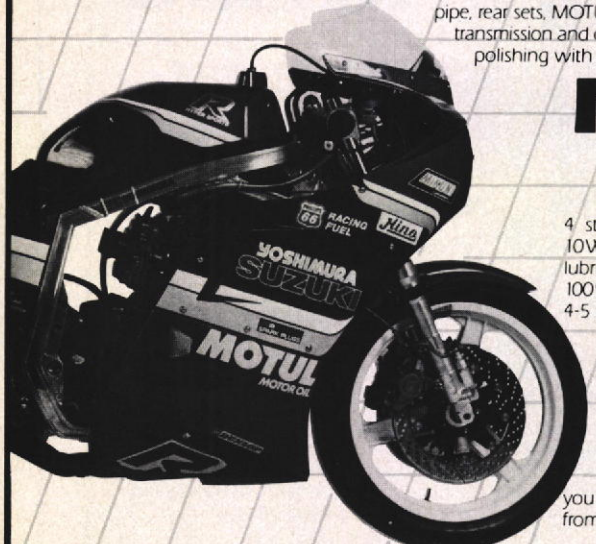

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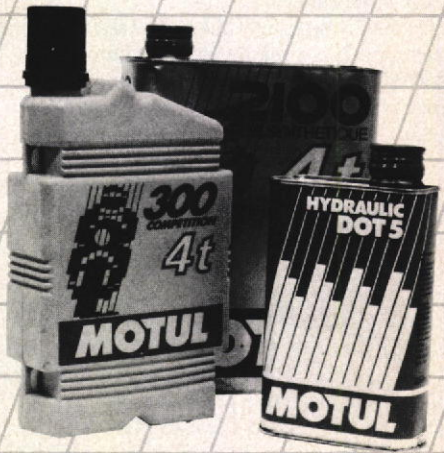

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team manager, the Goodyear is basically the same tire the blimp people used three years ago. Though slightly stickier than the Carlisle, the Goodyear reportedly shows little improvement with wear, a major problem on Mile tracks. The jury is still out on the Continentals.

• Weight a minute: While watching the San Jose Mile qualifying heats from the Camel cigarettes hospitality suite, Honda's director of racing, Gary Mathers, spied Harley-Davidson's jockey-size rider, Chris Carr, noting, "Carr's got gearing." To which Honda's roadrace mechanic Phil McDonald replied, "He's got weight." To which a reporter sitting nearby said, "No, he *doesn't* have weight."

• J.R. Jr.: Shortly before the Dallas Supercross, two-time SX champ, David Bailey, sounded a lot like television's J.R. Ewing when he said, "When we race in Dallas, I won't be out to make friends . . . I'll be trying to get to the finish line first." Bailey, who won the Pontiac doubleheader two weeks before, was good for his words at Dallas, too. His Hondamate, Rick Johnson, finished second, putting him closer to the series title, which he wrapped up 14 days later at Phoenix.

• ¡Bravo, Esteban!: Mientras el personal de la revista Cycle World lamentaba la perdida de su record de las 24 horas a la Honda, Steve Anderson, redactor tecnico de dicha revista había víajado al sur a participar en el evento La Carrera y revindicar su honor. Anderson conquisto el primer lugar de La Carrera en una Cagiva F-1 vee-twin 750. El señor Esteban gano esta carrera de 145 millas desde Ensenada a San Felipe, en la Peninsula de Baja California á una velocidad de 106 millas por hora. Felicitaciones, Esteban!

• From mpg to mph: Thanks, in part, to a world oil glut, Cagiva is going after a land speed record. The goal is 160 mph—with a streamliner powered by a 125cc engine. Cagiva is sponsoring the LSR attempt of Dan Hanebrink, Rob Lebo and Andy Baines. The trio originally built their 'liner several years ago for the Craig Vetter High Mileage contest. "Nobody cares about good fuel mileage anymore," Hanebrink said, "so we've decided to go for a land speed record." A flip of a coin will determine which of the three will ride the WMX125-powered 'liner at Bonneville this summer. The current record stands at 153.8 mph, set in 1953 by NSU.

• Quote Department: There is life for factory riders after their contracts have expired. As Ricky Graham, who enjoyed two excellent seasons with Honda, put it early this year when he set out on the CPS with his small squadron of self-sponsored Hondas, "It's hard to get used to being a privateer."

Continued

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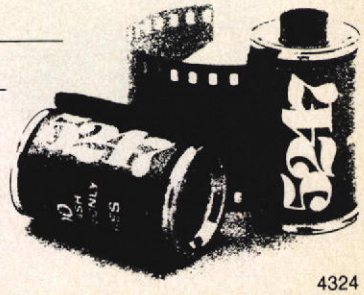

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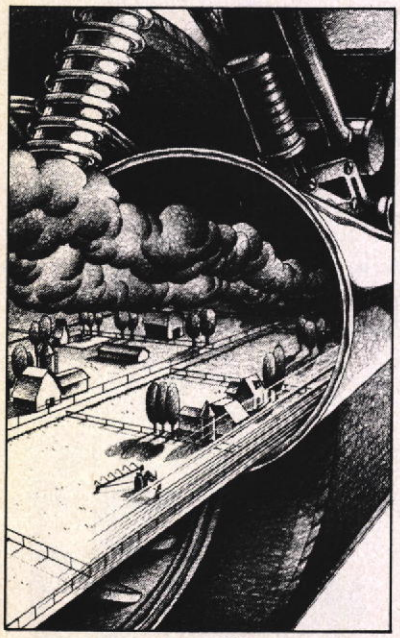

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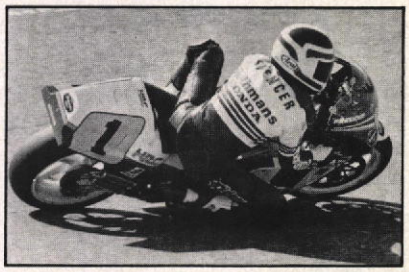
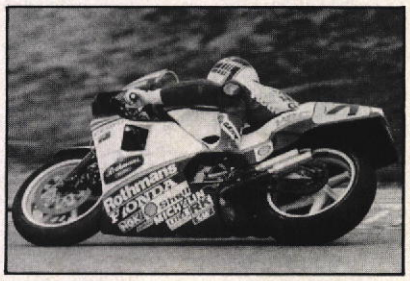


Spencer and Gardner for Honda

Big guns, pointed at Yamaha.



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• Freddie Spencer began the 1986 Grand Prix season where he left off last year—as an injured champion. Having opened up a 10-second lead at the Spanish GP last May, Spencer dropped out of the race when tendinitis seized his right wrist.

"I injured my wrist five years ago, and that may have something to do with it," Spencer said after the race. "The forearm muscle pumps up so tight that it cuts off the circulation, and then I cannot brake or even hang onto the handlebars. I went in (to a corner) one lap, and my hand locked up." Spencer's old nemesis, Kenny Roberts, had a similar problem corrected by surgery earlier this year. But going under the knife early in the season would practically assure that Spencer wouldn't retain the world championship. So for now, the Honda rider is relying on cortisone injections to reduce the swelling.

Even if Spencer's health continues to hamper his riding this year, Honda has what appears to be the perfect backup rider for the world champion: Wayne Gardner. In his first factory ride, he won the Spanish GP at Jarama, beating Yamaha's Eddie Lawson by nearly three seconds.

Gardner's win—his first GP victory ever—was no big surprise, either. The Jarama racetrack has 13 turns and countless bumps packed into its 2.06 miles of tarmac. It's the kind of course that suits Gardner's style of hard braking and brash sliding through the corners, techniques he learned racing four-strokes in Australia and England before joining the Grand Prix circuit two years ago.

The Australian wasn't the only first-year factory rider who turned heads at Jarama, May 4. Mike Baldwin debuted his Team Roberts' Lucky Strike Yamaha YZR500, taking it to third place. Baldwin, who struggled with an aging RS500 the past few seasons, said the YZR500 was easy to ride. "I knew that I had an advantage because of the way the bike was set up," he said.

Despite Gardner's first trip to the victory podium's centerstage tier and Baldwin's presence alongside him, Spencer remains the man to beat this year—if he's healthy. As Lawson put it, "I think there's one guy right now, and it's Freddie. Other guys go fast here and there. Freddie goes fast at all of them."

Even Gardner looks up, so to speak, to the defending World Champion. "I only try to compare myself to Freddie in lap times," he said. "To me, he's my hero these days, because he's so good, fast and safe."

Spencer has his own views, though, about who's the best. "The number one guy, of course, is Eddie," he said. "He knows his limits. When it comes down to it, the same guy will be there."

Even though Spencer leads Lawson two to one in the primary voting, the only balloting that counts is on the racetrack. And in those polls, Lawson joined Gardner two weeks after Spain by winning the Italian GP. In fact, Spencer remained on the disabled list at Italy, and Gardner was scratched from the ballot when he was blindsided by another rider at the start. The absence of both Honda riders left the door open for a clean sweep by Yamaha-mounted Americans, with Baldwin finishing third to teammate Randy Mamola.

Whether Spencer can bounce back after missing a couple of races remains to be seen. "It's a long season," he said after Italy, "and all it takes is a DNF or two by Eddie, and we're even again." But there, Lawson has the edge—in three full GP seasons, he has only one DNF. And every pollster agrees that's a track record that puts Eddie in the driver's seat for the championship this year. •

—Dain Gingerelli

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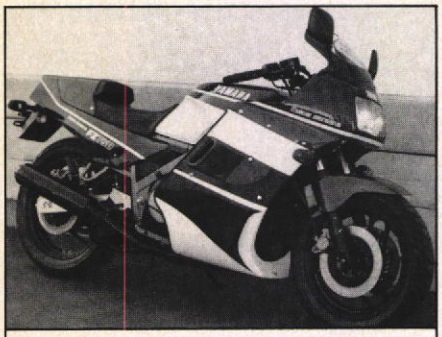

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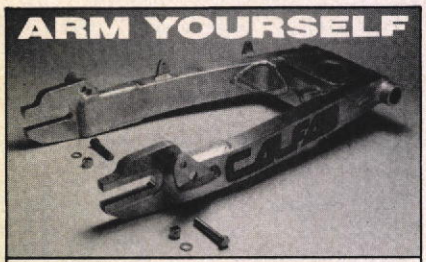

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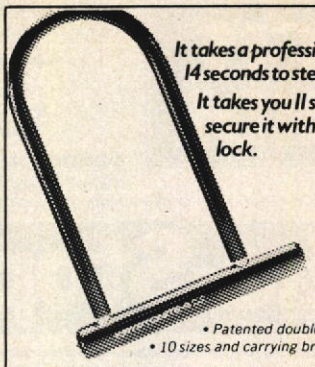

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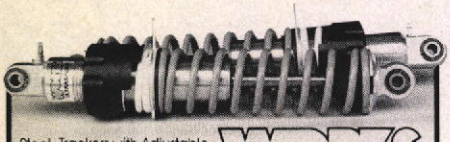

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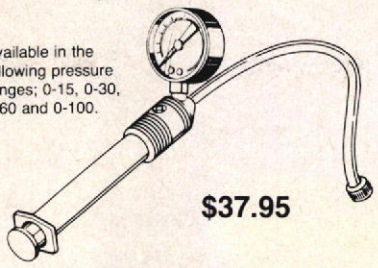

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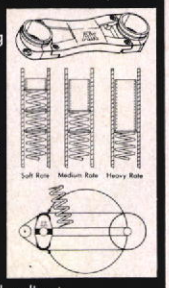

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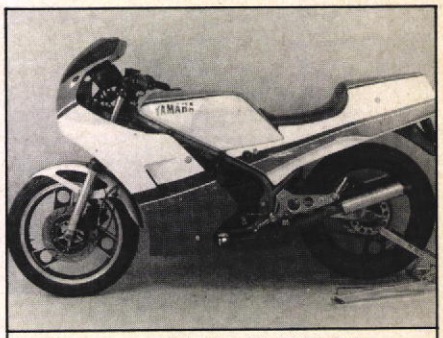

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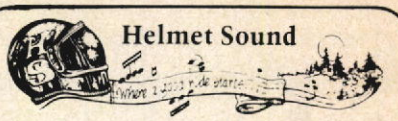

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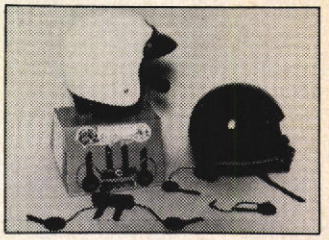

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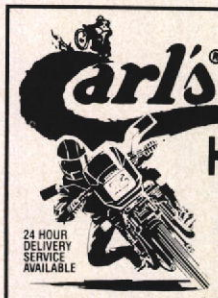

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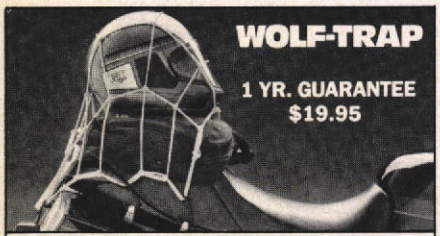

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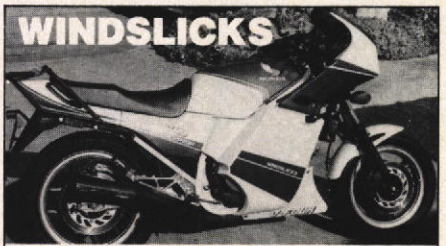

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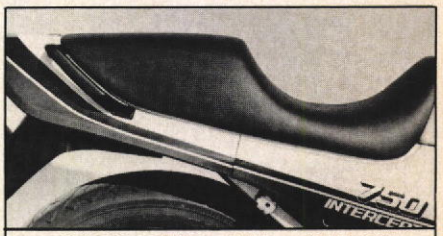

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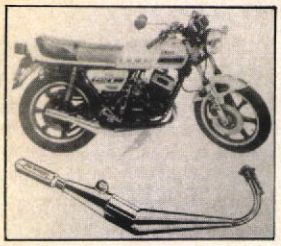

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Guest Editorial

A Matter Of Principle

The view from the saddle depends on which saddle you're in.

• Used to be, you could do just about all there was to do with one motorcycle. Everything from hare 'n hounds to a coast-to-coast run was fair game. No more, of course; focusing on a limited number of tasks has become a necessary corollary of excellence. Naturally, such specialization exists in riders as well as in their hardware. You'd no more catch Terry Vance sliding around on a speedway bike than you'd find Freddie Spencer slogging through an enduro. I've got a specialty, too. I ride wobbly gurneys on the emergency-room circuit.

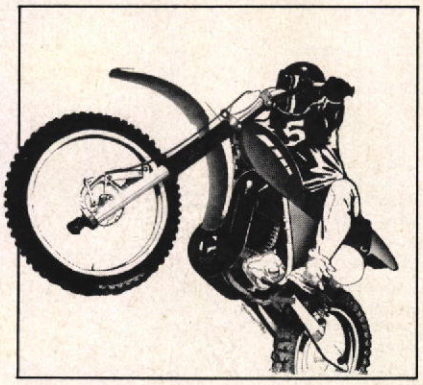
To be precise, I *used* to. It's a fact, not one I brag about, but a fact nonetheless. I suffer gravel rash as a chronic ailment. The condition originated from constant testing of an age-old principle: You can't *really* know how far a motorcycle will lean until you've gone too far. Although no one's talking about it much, the condition is fairly common among testers.

For reasons I can't now explain, I kept testing The Principle, although each time its logic proved inescapable. It was undeniably true through nine of my own bikes; I crashed each one to some degree in finding out just what Father Physics and built-in limitations—my own and the bike's—wouldn't allow. Fortunately, it wasn't necessary to repeat the exercise. Once I had graphic evidence—X-rays serve nicely—of the inherent limitations, I'd repair the bikes and ride them for years afterward without mishap.

Unfortunately, The Principle was just as true for an embarrassingly large number of CYCLE GUIDE test bikes. And because a half dozen or so new bikes appeared each month, I got to verify the immutability of this basic truth on a group of motorcycles large enough to be statistically valid.

I don't want to give the impression that every motorcycle with its sidestand up was in peril with me around, though a few *did* tremble nervously whenever I strode into the garage. Often months, even years, passed relatively uneventfully. But I could sense things were not quite right by the way the Blue Cross agent hid under his desk whenever I came in for another pad of claims forms.

Something had to give. Finally, I retired to testing one-horsepower transportation on a cattle ranch in Arizona, and to simply *enjoying* motorcycles whose performance



envelopes required no further examination. It was about then that I discovered the striking similarities between a good streetbike and a spirited cutting horse. They both wear saddles, some have saddlebags, and the good ones can accelerate, turn and stop quickly enough to maintain your interest.

The similarities aren't limited to running gear and basic performance, though. For instance, when a galloping barrel racer loses a lead shoe and hangs up a hoof in the process, the sensation is remarkably akin to blowing a front tire at speed. Things get real shaky, real fast, and you can find yourself going over the handlebar (read: neck) with the motorcycle (read: horse) doing its level best to run you down. Once you're intimate with the earth and the major pieces have come to rest, you look over to see your mount giving you the walleye, as if to say, "Why did you ever do that?" Really, it's uncanny. A *déjà vu* with a mane. I've even got one horse who's more like an Open-classer with a stuck-open throttle than *any* dirtbike ever built.

As fascinating as the common ground—both philosophical and physical—is, however, it was a recent bout with the *difference* that stuck in my mind. It started out just like a motorcycle accident, all right. There was the same time-extension of a good two-wheeled getoff: You register what's gone wrong—and why—note that attempts at control correction have failed and that shortly you and terra firma will be as one. Only this particular motorcycle accident took place on a horse.

The resemblance was even more remarkable, because the three-year-old greenbroke mare under me was doing a passable imitation of a GPz on which someone had cleverly substituted a reverse gear for sixth after removing the handlebar mounting bolts. Actually, there's a bit more altitude to shed when descending from a horse, and the slide afterward is shorter. Aside from that, though, it was the same. I speak from great experience.

Even the immediate aftereffects were so close as to be undetectable from the real thing. First came the awareness that one of my extremities wasn't the same shape as it was moments before, followed by the clear understanding that my annual checkup had just been advanced by about five months.

At that point, the motorcycle/horse comparison began to unravel, however, because what happened next was unlike any other voyage through the medical domain I'd ever experienced. As far as I was concerned, the fact that mine wasn't a motorcycle getoff was a mere technicality, yet something was missing. Where were the snide comments about my lack of intelligence, those reminders that only a motorcyclist would be so foolish as to ride a motorcycle? Where were the freely offered statistics about a veritable army of friends and relatives who'd come to no good on bikes? Instead, I got practically a standing ovation for my fall, and I was assured I'd be back in the saddle in about 10 weeks. Not once was I asked if I was going to "give it up."

I felt as out of place as if I'd blundered into the little cowgirl's room by mistake. My repertoire of lively, colorful banter against the medical community's anti-motorcycle bias was simply excess baggage.

If I'm oversensitive to that bias, at least I'm not alone. My esteemed colleague, Daingerous Dain Gingerelli, concurs. Like me, he has some experience in these matters. He was already doing postgraduate study in Motorcycle Aftermath when I met him 10 years ago. He's even gone so far as to go home following a getoff, change clothes and go into the hospital with no trace of motorcycle on him. Perhaps he didn't get better doctoring by doing it, but he's convinced he got better treatment.

Granted, such play-acting shouldn't be necessary, and maybe it isn't in most cases. But if you've ever been admitted to a hospital following a motorcycle mishap, you might've considered it, simply as an alternative to a barrage of "facts" on the perils of two wheels. In the future, should it prove necessary, I'll willingly report any glaring problems along those lines to the AMA—both of them, in fact. Until something major changes, though, I'll keep riding my pretested motorcycles as experience has taught me works best: in cowboy boots, jeans, and with pair of spurs in the tailsection, just in case. —*Larry Works*

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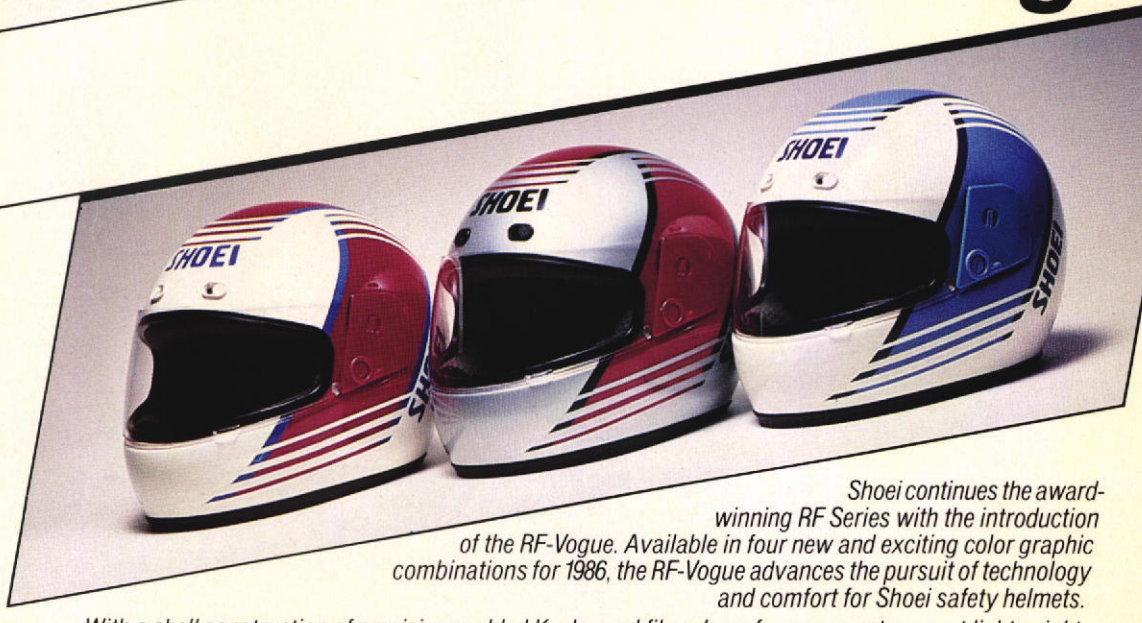

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